LOOK OUT FOR A WONDERFUL DETECTIVE STORY BEGINNING NEXT WEEK

BOYS, READ "LOST IN THE DESERT," ON PAGES TWELVE AND THIRTEEN

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Wm J Benners
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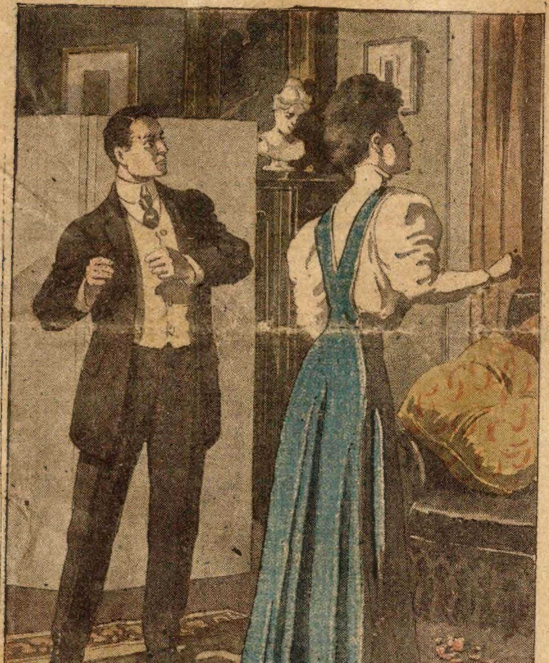
THE BLACK ELBOW;

Or, A Life at Stake

By J. M. MERRILL



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CHAPTER I.

THE LIGHTSTONES

I SAW Walter today, Elnora."

Ted Lightstone flung his hat into a corner and settled himself in a chair. His red hair stood up on a round head like bristles. The humorous curve at the corners of his mouth betokened a jovial nature.

A girl was moving about the room, humming a ditty. She had been somewhat disturbed by Teddy's sudden entrance. Her brother was a young whirlwind. He was the exact opposite of his calm-blooded, blonde sister.

"Why don't you ask me something, sis?" demanded Ted with a grin.

"No need of that. You are bursting to tell anyhow," retorted the girl.

"Not on your life."

Ted leaned back, crossed his knees and began to whistle. The tall girl went to a bird cage, hanging near, and spoke to "Dicky." She seemed not to care for the news her rattle-pated brother had at his tongue's end.

"Ah, pretty Dicky, pretty bird!" said Elnora.

Ted continued to whistle Yankee Doodle. The girl frowned. The boy was a tease. He was tantalizing her now. Walter Immerson came semi-occasionally to Boyd City, and always he called at the Lightstone cottage. It had been many weeks since she had seen the young lumberman. Her heart was a trifle lonely even with Ted, her Dicky and the rest of the family.

"Ted Lightstone, do stop that silly whistling," cried the girl, turning almost fiercely upon her brother.

"Oh, so you heard me, sis?" Ted grinned, then drew a sober face.

"Where was he, Ted?"

"Where was who, Elnora?"

"Oh, you bad creature——"

"D'ye mean Berry Cantwell? I s'pose you do. He's out of town just now, lookin' after timber-stealers. There's quite a hubbub about some of the sneak work over on the Manistee."

"Why, that's where Walter is located, Ted——"

"Yes, and you wonder if he has anything to do with the stealing," broke in the boy with a fiercer grin than ever. "Oh, I tell you the best of these pine men will bear watching. Now, as for Walt—well, nobody knows—one never can tell just what——"

"Hush your nonsense, Teddy."

Miss Lightstone turned her back and walked from the room, closing the door with a decided bang.

"Sis is mad now," chuckled the boy. "Well, it won't hurt her. Of course——"

A step on the walk cut short the lad's soliloquy. The bell rang and Ted sprang to the door, ushering in the subject of their conversation.

"Hello," said Ted. "So you came over after all? I was telling sis that you might not get to come, you was that busy, you know."

Ted placed a chair and sat himself down.

"How's things?" suddenly questioned the boy.

"Everything is all right. Where is Elnora?" The tall young man leaned against the mantel and regarded Ted from the corner of his eyes. Evening shadows had fallen and Ted turned on the lights. Walter Immerson was a fine specimen of American manhood. Tall, muscular, with smoothly-shaven face and eyes that were keen and penetrating. They could be stern on occasions, but now they gleamed with a pleasant glow.

"Sis is out just at present," said Ted. "Sit down and let's confab a bit. She'll be in before many minutes."

Immerson walked about the room uneasily. He frowned at the bird cage, tapped his fingers against the casing and glared out into the night. Something had gone wrong. Ted was keen enough to note this.

"I can't wait," he said, turning upon the boy. "Tell Elnora that I called."

Immerson started to go. At this moment, however, Elnora entered the room.

"A pair of dubs," muttered Ted as he slid from the room.

The boy glanced back in time to see the lips of the twain meet. He went out to the kitchen where Eve Lull was busying herself clearing up the dinner dishes. Her small hands were in the dishwater when Ted entered.

"He's come," said the boy.

"Who's come, Teddy?"

The girl at the sink turned her face toward the boy. It was a fine face, very delicate and refined for a work girl. Her hair was reddish brown and a real crown of beauty, Ted thought. Eve's eyes were deep brown, black sometimes, the boy knew, as when the town boys were tormenting a stray dog and she caught them at it. Ah, it was fun to see how those big eyes flashed then. And the soft cheeks went red and hot as she came gallantly to the rescue of the poor beast. One of the boys was impudent; called Eve a red-headed little imp. Ted resented that, as any honest boy would, and gave the insulter a sound thrashing. Ever after that the boy had been on good terms with his sister's help.

"Who'd you s'pose?" chuckled Ted.

"Very likely Mr. Cantwell."

"Not this time. Old Cant comes often enough, Heaven knows, but it's t'other one tonight."

"Mr. Immerson?"

"That's the one. Sis has two strings to her bow, all right," and Ted laughed not quite happily. "I don't just like it either. 'Tain't using Walt quite square, d'ye think so, Eve?"

"I'm sure I don't like to say."

"You needn't be scared of me, Eve. I won't tell anybody."

"Honest, now, Teddy?"

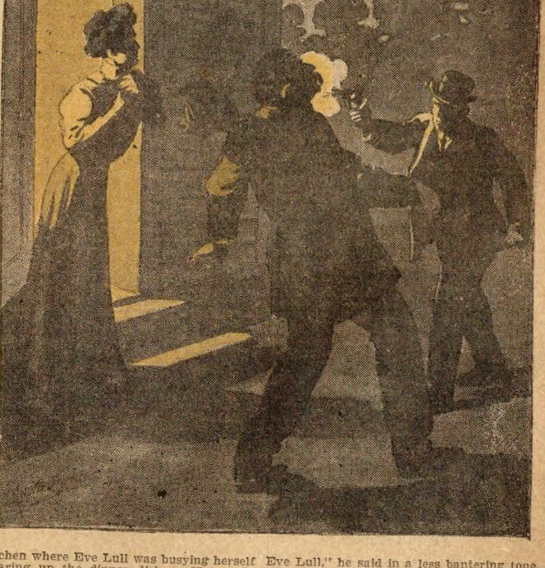
"Honest as gospel, Honey."

The boy approached and laid a hand on the girl's arm. She flung it off with a pretty toss of her red-gold head. She turned to the sink and poured out the water from her pan, then flirted the dishcloth over it till the tin shone like a mirror, after which she hung up the pan in a back room.

"What yer mad about, Honey?" chortled Ted.

"Don't be silly, Teddy."

The girl's cheeks were burning. Ted again approached and bent his grinning face toward her own.



"You don't like me a little bit, I see that, Eve Lull," he said in a less bantering tone. "I can't blame you either. Just the same, I think a heap of you. Was Eph up today?"

"I don't know who you mean?"

"Lordy, how ignorant all at once! Who else could I mean but Eph Gummer. He's stuck on you; he told me so himself."

The girl made no reply to this. She went about her work without looking toward her visitor. Ted liked of all things to loiter in his mother's kitchen. That mother was an invalid and seldom came down to this part of the house. Elnora was "boss of the ranch" as Ted expressed it, and had more than once cautioned her hilarious young brother about visiting the kitchen. Ted was not to be deterred, however. He liked bright, chatty girls, and Eve Lull was one of the brightest of his acquaintances.

"Was old man Cantwell here today, Eve?" suddenly queried the boy, who slouched over to the wood-box and sat down.

"I think he was."

"Don't you know?"

"Yes, I know. Mr. Cantwell was here for a long time this forenoon."

"So!" Ted whistled softly. He glanced toward the ceiling. Elnora was not dealing quite squarely with Immerson, the lumberman from the Manistee. The young man was reputed fast climbing the ladder. He had lumbered extensively on different streams and was fast making his way up into the ranks of the lumber barons of the State. Cantwell, however, stood long since on the top round of the ladder.

Ted favored Immerson. And judging from the scene he had witnessed as he passed from the cottage parlor, his sister was of the same notion.

"D'ye know what the old one wanted, Eve?"

"Why, how should I? I suppose he came to see Miss Lightstone."

"Yes, of course."

Ted took several turns about the room, whistling. At length he halted in front of Eve Lull, a peculiar half-smile, half-frown on his broad face. "Eve, there's been some dark whispering around town lately," he said.

"What about?"

"About timber thieves."

"Yes?"

"The Government folks are up in arms about it."

"Is that so?"

"Yes, it's so."

"Well, what has come of it?"

The girl, having finished her work, stood facing her boy visitor with an eager inquiry in her dark eyes.

"Not much yet, but there's going to be a rattling among some old codgers before long. This stealing isn't anything recent, but has been going on for a year. It's mostly on the Manistee, too."

"Indeed?"

"I wouldn't be surprised if somebody went over the road, too."

"Could they send 'em to prison for that, Teddy?"

"Could they? Well, let me tell you. Uncle Sam is no respecter of persons. When he gets after evil-doers, then look out!"

"My, I hope it won't be anybody around here——"

"But it is."

"It is?"

A pair of big brown eyes opened wide in astonishment.

"Nobody knows who, but the detective has his eye on some one in our little city. I heard 'em talking down to Devlin's grocery."

"Well, I'm sure it won't hurt anybody that we know," said the girl.

"I ain't so blamed sure about that."

Ted turned suddenly and went to the door. He heard a sound outside that attracted him. He opened the door. A breath of September air came in. It was refreshing. The boy stepped outside. He closed the door behind him.

Eve Lull was also curious. She followed to the door and pulled it open. Lights flashed across the yard. Two figures met, then came a flash and the sharp bark of a pistol.

CHAPTER II.

A QUARREL AND A SHOT.

It was true that the young Manistee lumberman was the favored one in the eyes of Elnora Lightstone. She received him as we have seen, with a kiss. Truth was, these twain were engaged to marry.

Immerson was thirty, heart whole and prospering when he met Miss Lightstone. They were mutually attracted toward each other. The lumberman visited the cottage as often as business cares would permit, and finally declared his love and was accepted. This was the status of affairs at the time our story opens.

"You have been in town some time?" Elnora said.

Immerson was seated now. He was looking anywhere but at his betrothed. His face was rather pale, despite the brown of tanning sun and wind.

"Yes. Business first always, you know, Elnora," said he with a laugh.

"I suppose so." She was not quite at ease herself. Her trouble came from certain words let fall by her visitor of the morning, Berry Cantwell.

"Have you heard anything about timber thieves, Walter?"

"Timber thieves!"

He started and glanced at her sharply.

"Why, yes. There are stories afloat to that effect. It is said that log-cutters on the Manistee have been robbing the Government, and that detectives are looking into it," said Elnora with great frankness. She did not tell him what Cantwell had hinted that men on the "Black Elbow" were among the suspects. Immerson was logging the Elbow, and he was suspected by Cantwell. She noted the effect of her words. They seemed to worry her visitor. A sudden pain darted to her heart. What if—but she shut her teeth behind such an unworthy suspicion. Immerson coughed and seemed a trifle confused.

"Who has circulated such yarns?" he suddenly demanded.

"Many people——"

"Name one, please?"

"I might name a good many."

"Town gossip, eh?"

He seemed annoyed. The girl bit her lip and felt a coolness steal across the space between them. Cantwell had said much derogatory to the good name of the lumberman of Black Elbow. She had refused to believe, however, preferring to trust her lover, and give him a showing for explanation. He did not seem anxious to defend himself, however. What could she think?

"Not wholly that, Walter," she said after a moment. "One of Boyd City's leading citizens has spoken——"

"You mean——"

"Mr. Berry Cantwell."

"That man!"

Immerson sprang to his feet, trembling in anger. He crossed the floor and back three times ere he spoke again. When at length he paused before the beautiful blonde, his face was pale and rigid with emotion.

"Elnora, what did that man tell you?"

He spoke with enforced calmness. He moistened his dry lips repeatedly with the tip of his tongue. The girl saw all this and her heart sank.

"He told me a good many things, Walter," she found voice at length to say. "I don't know that I can remember half of his outpouring. He was considerably excited at the thought of his being robbed by a friend. He——"

"Was he speaking then of me, Elnora?"

"Yes——"

"The scoundrel!"

"But, sir—Walter, he meant no disrespect."

"Of course not. To call a man a thief is treating him with the utmost respect. Elnora, why did you listen? That scoundrel has it in for me because of you. I know he would like to separate us. You told me that he was once your suitor. I know what he is planning. He would ruin me that he may win your praise. Stay; don't interrupt me, please. I know the heart of Berry Cantwell better than you do. He is deceitful and mean by nature. He deserted and ruined one woman, and now he will commit another crime if he is allowed free rein. Don't trust him, Elnora."

The last words were in the nature of an appeal. The girl sat rigid. She did not quite know how to act. Something seemed to tell her that this man standing here, the accuser of another, was not quite sincere. She had been very sure of her heart till now. Immerson had protested and stormed, but not one word had he said about his own innocence.

"I cannot refuse to trust Mr. Cantwell till I know him to be other than he seems," she said slowly.

"But did I not tell you that he is a scoundrel?"

"True, but——"

"You do not believe me, Elnora?"

His dark eyes sought her face with eager questioning.

"I believe you mean well, Walter, but you have perhaps deceived yourself. Mr. Cantwell is thought well of in Boyd City."

"By those who are dependent on his bounty perhaps."

"By every one, Walter."

"By you in particular," he sneered. "I am sorry you cannot trust me, Elnora. If we cannot agree in small matters we are not likely to get along in others. Perhaps——" He seemed to hesitate, glancing aside. "I wish I had come down a day sooner."

"Why do you wish that?"

"In that case Cantwell would not have got in his snake and fish story about log-stealing, and you would be willing to listen to the proposition I came to make," declared he in some heat.

She said nothing, but sat picking a house flower to bits. The girl was a bit nervous. Tall Walter still stood, swaying uneasily, and glaring about without catching the eye of his betrothed.

"I am ready to hear your defense," she suddenly said.

"My defense?" he asked tentatively.

"Against these charges of taking Government timber."

"And did he dare insinuate that I——"

He got no further. The words choked him.

"There were no insinuations, Walter. He stated plainly that timber had been cut on Government land and that men in your employ had cut it. He was lenient enough to think that you might not have countenanced the steal."

"You heard him say all this, Elnora?" cried Immerson, going pale.

"Yes," faintly.

"And what did you tell him after that?"

"I defended you, of course."

"You were very kind."

His lip curled. She did not like his manner. He bit his lip, frowned and grew restive.

"And now I am waiting for you to explain, Walter."

She guarded her words, yet a slight tremor agitated her voice.

"I have nothing to explain."

He drew himself up proudly. Buttoning his coat to his chin, he turned and crossed to the door. She made no move to detain him. He must have expected that she would. He paused and looked about. Elnora sat stiffly gazing at the carpet. He seemed to hesitate. If he went now there could be no retracement of steps, it would be forever.

"I cannot go like this," he breathed, turning swiftly and going to her side. He bent low and touched her gold hair with his lips. "Elnora, look at me." She was as immovable as stone. "I will tell you what I came for. I have been wanting you for such a great while. Will you go with me to the Manistee?"

Not a move or word on her part. He paused to give her opportunity to speak. Since she did not, he resumed:

"My business interests are such that I cannot leave them again. Will you go back with me as my wife?"

His strong voice was almost pathetic in its depth and earnestness. He was pleading as only a strong man could. There was, however, the same objection as of old, an invalid mother to be cared for. The girl did not advance this excuse now, however. She felt that she had one even more potent.

"After you explain this timber trouble I will answer, Walter," she said.

He reeled as though given a slap in the face.

"There is nothing to explain," was his quick reply.

He stood fully upright again. A stern anger lit his keen eyes. She had plucked her flower to shreds and cast it on the carpet at her feet. His persistent ignoring of this charge chafed and annoyed her.

"Elnora, you haven't answered my question," he said, bending near once more, the light in his eyes growing softer.

"You haven't answered mine, sir. Until you deny these terrible charges I cannot think of considering anything else."

"Elnora!"

He stepped back, facing her with folded arms and compressed lips. His proud bearing was kingly. She was thrilled and gratified. That shocked ejaculatory cry ought to have convinced her. If it did, she would not permit him to think so.

"Heroics won't do. I will never marry a man accused of crime," she said in a tone of voice that was harder than flint.

"That ends it then."

He turned again to the door. She heard him open the portal and pass out. He was gone. She had sent him away, never to return. Had she been harsh? Her heart pleaded for him. She knew that Cantwell was not Walter's friend. Yet why should he refuse to deny the accusations of even an enemy? His indignation over the charges, and feeling hurt because she even asked him to defend himself of a charge absurd and unjust, was his animating motive.

"Walter, oh, Walter, come back!"

Elnora sprang up, went to the door and opened it, intent on undoing what she now realized was a wrong. She stood trembling on the threshold.

Two forms were struggling on the walk before her door. It was scarcely light enough to make out faces. There was a desperate battle going on. When the girl turned to call for help, a bright flash split the darkness, followed by a sharp report. One of the combatants ran from the spot. The other uttered a cry of pain and staggered to the low porch, falling bleeding at the feet of the startled young girl.

CHAPTER III.

MISS LULL AND TEDDY.

A pallid-faced man lay on some blankets in the cottage parlor. He was Steve Furray, sheriff of an outside county. It was now morning of the day following the exciting scenes of the night.

"Yes, miss, I shall feel better at the hospital. You have been mighty kind all the same. Have you or the boy heard anything about the man who shot me last night?"

"Nothing at all, sir."

It was a white, distraught face that the wounded man looked at.

"You did not make sure who it was?" asked the girl.

"Oh, it was Immerson all right enough," and a chuckle rolled from the fellow's lips. The sheriff was a border character, brave as a lion, and a dead shot, yet he had allowed himself to be overcome, and by a man whom he thought unused to firearms. There was chagrin written on the rugged face of the wounded officer.

"Why did he shoot?"

"I had a warrant for him."

"Yes?" in a low query.

"It's the general Government 'at wants him. Cutting timber on the wrong land. Big offense. State's prison if convicted. We won't see any more of that cuss in these parts. I was a blamed fool to let him get the drop on me this way. Now somebody else will win the reward." A groan followed.

"Is there a reward?" she asked huskily.

"Cert. I might have winged the devil, but I wanted to fetch him in unhurt. I knew old Walt once when he was white. Once a man gits into swift water in business affairs you can't trust him."

"This is his first offense?"

Elnora was surprised at her lack of feeling, her unwonted calm. Somehow all that had passed was like a dream. She was glad that the officer had not been fatally injured. The doctor gave him a month in which to recover.

"His first and I hope to God his last," muttered Furray.

There was no denying the fact that her lover was in deep water. When the city ambulance came and took the wounded man away, Elnora breathed easier. She was as near a collapse as possible. Ted did not try to comfort her. He defended Immerson, however.

"I don't believe a dum thing," he declared. "Walt ain't no sich a feller. I know how old Cantwell hates him, and this is some of that old scalawag's doings, you can bet on that."

"Now see here, Teddy, don't slander a friend——"

"What, him a friend! Great snakes alive! Well, when I want anything of a friendly nature done, old Cant will be the last man I'd hail up. Did you'n Walt have a row last night, sis?"

"No, there was no real quarrel."

"I think there was."

"I don't care what you think, Teddy. I hope we shall never see that man again. I have been shocked almost into fainting over his acts."

"There, what'd I tell you. There was a quarrel. It was all on account of this timber business, too."

"Well, isn't that enough?"

"If it was all true, but it's a blame lie!"

"Hush, Teddy."

"Hush nothing. If old Cantwell calls here again I'll show him the door."

Elnora left her brother without further argument. The day passed, night fell once more. The girl felt weary and heart-sore. The morning paper had been filled with accounts of the timber steal and of the fracas at the home of the Lightstones. Walter Immerson, the lumberman of Black Elbow, was a fugitive from justice with a reward upon his head.

Elnora felt worse over the shooting than she did about the other accusation. Walter was indeed a desperate man to thus attempt to murder the officer who tried to arrest him.

Rain was beginning to fall as Elnora stepped upon the street a few blocks from her own door, whither she had been on an errand.

A man stepped to her side bearing an umbrella. He sheltered her with this and paced along at her side. A solid man of the world was Berry Cantwell. He was in love with Elnora and had decided that he could not be happy till she was his wife.

The two walked along for several moments without speaking. At length the man cleared his throat and said:

"Quite exciting times last night."

"I should say as much. I never thought that he could be so wicked."

"You speak of Walter Immerson, of course. I confess that his acts are a surprise to me as well," declared the man. "I knew he had trespassed on Government land, had even cut some of my timber, but I did not dare accuse him of being half the villain that he is. So he had the audacity to call on you yesterday, Miss Lightstone?"

"Yes, He called last evening."

Her heart beat a little faster, and she turned her face away to hide the hurt that still lingered there.

"I am very sorry for you both," said Cantwell in a low, easy tone. "You see, I understand how he stood with you. It was throwing away the happiness of a lifetime. I would sooner die than wreck two lives as he has done."

"He wrecked his own. I know of no other——" she began in reply.

"Then I was mistaken in thinking that you cared for him, Miss Lightstone. I know the gossips had you two engaged."

"Some people are never happy unless slandering their betters."

He regarded her keenly. He could detect no break in her voice. If she had loved this disgraced man, she did not wear her heart in the public eye.

"Then it was slander. I can believe it now. Did he attempt to clear his skirts when he met you last evening? Of course, he knew——"

"He made no attempt on that score."

"Perhaps you did not give him an opportunity?"

"You may be sure that I did. I would rather not speak of him again, Mr. Cantwell. The subject is distasteful to me."

"I beg your pardon. We'll let him drop."

Ted was in the kitchen talking with Eve Lull when his sister reached home accompanied by Mr. Cantwell. The boy heard voices and soon discovered the identity of Elnora's companion.

"Blamed if that old sinner hasn't come home with sis," exclaimed Ted. "Watch me make him skip."

"But, Teddy," warned the kitchen maid, "you mustn't do anything foolish."

"Would it be foolish to put a flea in that duffer's ear?" asked the boy. "See what he has done——"

"Nothing out of the way, I hope," said Eve.

"You hope wrong then. Where is Walt Immerson now, tell me that?"

"Ask me something easy, Teddy."

"Well, if it hadn't been for old Cant, Walter wouldn't be a fugitive from law. Cant set the officers onto him and the fellow had to shoot in self-defense. Now he'll fare hard if they do get him."

"So you justify his shot at the officer, Teddy?" The big brown eyes of pretty Miss Lull fixed themselves full upon his face. Teddy blushed and turned away. The kitchen girl seemed to fear that Ted was determined upon making trouble. She followed him to the door and placed a hand upon his arm.

"Don't go in there, Teddy," she warned him.

"And why not?" he demanded almost fiercely.

"Because it wouldn't be using Miss Lightstone right, Teddy."

"I wonder if it wouldn't. So you choose to stand up for this duffer who has been the cause of Walt's running away. I didn't think that of you, Eve. Sure, I thought you'd stand by him. He has always been a friend of yours, Eve Lull. You know——"

"Oh, yes, Teddy. I know how kind Mr. Immerson has ever been. You see, he knew my father, and well understood that I was not a servant from choice."

"Cheese the servant business, Eve," broke in the boy, with a half-laugh. "Don't I know that you was born a lady, and that you are jest as smart and blue-blooded as ever Elnora can be? Of course, I do, and I glory in your grit. Now what makes you go back on Walter? He's clean sand from top to toe."

"So he is, Teddy, but making faces at Mr. Cantwell won't help your dear Walter any; and it was reckless of him to shoot——"

"No it wasn't. He was defending himself is all."

Ted was still belligerent where his friend was concerned.

"Well, it may be," returned Eve thoughtfully. "I would not condemn anybody unheard. If he were here to talk for himself it would be different." A far away look filled the eyes of the girl who, from force of circumstances, had been compelled to accept work of the most menial nature.

Ted opened the door. Some one was coming up the walk toward the house. The boy halted and watched. He heard the front door bell twang, then the sound of voices. Presently the caller walked hurriedly back to the street and disappeared. Ted was interested. He hurriedly closed the door, himself outside in the darkness.

"Somebody came in a hurry, and Elnora's talking quite loud. I'll investigate."

Meantime, having completed her kitchen work, Eve Lull drew her chair up to the table and opened a book that she had been thinking about reading for some time. Sitting there in the lamplight, sweet Eve Lull made a pretty picture, such a one as would have delighted the heart of a home-lover.

It would hardly be fair to compare the two, mistress and kitchen maid, and yet each was equally attractive. Immerson had noticed it once when he saw the two standing together under an arbor vine. Elnora was a deep blonde, with the liquid violet eyes and yellow hair of her kind, while Eve was darker, yet not of the brunette type. Her cheeks were rather pale, and the brown eyes sometimes black in the shadows. Her hair, magnificent in quantity and quality, was very near the Titian tint so raved about at one time.

While the girl sat reading, Ted came whirling in.

"Ho, Eve, it's up to poor Walt now!" exclaimed the impulsive boy.

"What is it, Teddy?" asked the girl, springing quickly up.

"Steve Furray, the man that was shot, died tonight. A man just fetched the news. Now, of course, poor Walt will have to stand trial for murder!"

CHAPTER IV.

SINISTER VISITORS.

A large bend in the Manistee River has long been known as "The Black Elbow." It was on this horseshoe formation that Walter Immerson lumbered at the time the events transpired as narrated in preceding chapters.

Black Elbow was nearly a hundred miles distant from Boyd City.

Immerson came directly to the scene of his logging operations after his trouble in town.

The immensity of his work was little understood by those who disliked him. He had loyal friends and many enemies, as has nearly ever man who ventures to carry on great enterprises. The kings of the business world are cordially hated by a class in whose seared brains burn fires of bestial lust. Men who live by exploiting their betters sometimes step very near to the bounds of lawful procedure in their anxiety to "do" the man from whom they have received consideration.

Immerson was a lumber baron in a small way. He was a just man, however, and tried to do his duty as he understood it. He had been distinctly shocked at the accusation of Berry Cantwell.

If he was a timber thief it was not an intentional one. Some of the men of best repute had, at an earlier day, exploited the Government. It was by some deemed an evidence of cuteness, of great business acumen to produce unusually large returns from lands adjoining the Government preserves. It was not wrong to "skin" over Government lands. The logger who got the most was the best fellow.

That sort of feeling was in the past. At the time of Immerson new laws were on the statute books, and a raid on Government lands meant the penitentiary to the man who was caught.

Immerson sat one morning conversing with a meaty young man, whose face held an expression of keen intelligence, although he wore the conventional backwoods garb of wamus and overalls.

"I know there are Government lands to the west," said Immerson, continuing a conversation that had been going on for some time, "but I have been very careful not to trespass. Do you know where the lines are, Ferguson?"

"It's as I tell you, Walt, there ain't any of the old marks left, and I've half a mind to think the cutters have got beyond their rights."

"In that case we shall have trouble."

Immerson was up, pacing the shanty floor.

"Well, there's no call to be scart," broke in Ferguson. "It surely ain't your fault if them blamed fools cut over the line while you was gone. I've been a timber ranger these ten year, and I wouldn't swear to the exact lines down by the neck. You might send for old Fransway; he's surveyed almost everything hereabouts and ought to know something about it."

"Can you see him, Ferguson?"

The boss turned upon his employe with a relieved expression.

"I reckon I can, sir."

"All right. You fetch the old fellow in and have him run the lines; I'll see that he is paid well for the job."

Ferguson quitted the shanty and Immerson stood for some time in a reflective attitude. He had some rather unlovely thoughts just then. Berry Cantwell was a rival lumberman and distinctly not his friend. Immerson was well aware of this fact. Nevertheless, if his workmen had trespassed on other lands, could he blame Cantwell for making trouble?

Then there was Elnora. She occupied a large share of the lumberman's thoughts this morning. He had left her under a cloud. The young man was distinctly in a sour state of mind.

"Confound that man anyhow," he muttered. He lit a cigar and smoked up like a steam engine. Now and then his teeth cut the twist of Havana with vicious fierceness. "This Government business is nasty. Cantwell has me on the hip and will make the most of it. And the girl? Well, if she hears that I have broken the least of the Ten Commandments, I am Dennis, so far as she is concerned."

Fiercely chewing at his cigar, the lumberman quitted the place.

Immerson crossed the open space between the shanties and opened a door, peering inside. He saw no one. The desk and office chair met his eye. The room was vacant. He thought to have a word with his bookkeeper. Since he was still away from the office Immerson would not wait. He walked past the long bunk-shanty and plunged down a logging road toward the river. Reaching the bank he halted and studied the wind of the stream far below.

Here and there bobbed a pine sawlog as it collided with a root or stone along the shore. Far away to the south curled the smoke of another camp. The man knew that this marked the holdings of Cantwell, the money king of the Manistee.

Cantwell was not a sociable man. At least Immerson had found this to be true during his intercourse with him. That he should prove an enemy to the extent of seeking his ruin was a surprise. Yet it was he who had been to Elnora with his news of a Government steal. Immerson's cheek flushed when he thought of it, and something like an oath marred his lips.

There could be no friendship between the two men after this.

Chewing viciously, the cigar was fast becoming pulp. The fire burned his lip and Immerson spat it out. He took another and lit it. Then he turned into another road and plunged into the depths of the woods. On and on he strode, crunching twigs and frosted grass beneath his heel.

The sweet, yet harsh sing of a crosscut saw greeted his ears. Soon the man mounted a fallen tree and walked toward the two woodsmen who were drawing the saw.

"Good morning, boys."

"Good day to yeh, Mr. Immerson."

A tall, gray-shirted woodsman pulled off his moist cap and smiled.

"We are having nice weather, Tom. I see that you are improving it all right," and Immerson cast his eye across long skidways filled with the product of the forest.

"We're doin' our best anyhow, boss," laughingly replied the smaller man.

Immerson ran a keen eye across the open woods. He knew that it was not far from here that the line marked the boundary between his holdings and those of Uncle Sam.

"Do you know where you are, boys?" asked Immerson at length.

"Oh, yes, I reckon we do."

"You are mighty close to the line, I'm thinking."

"Yes, I s'pect we are, boss. But then, that's all right, ain't it?"

"Sure, unless you get on the wrong side."

"I don't reckon we'll do that. You see them blazes over there. Well, they was made by old Fransway. He come over one day and compassed his way through. Said the Gov'ment sent him."

"Ah, then there's been some one looking up the line. Are you sure there's no timber cut across——"

"Sure, boss."

Immerson cut his cigar with his teeth, and looked thoughtful. He believed the men were telling the truth.

"Did Fransway say who employed him?" he asked.

"No——"

"Why, yes he did," broke in the tall man. "He said t'was Gov'ment."

"Exactly."

"He said he was doing the same work all through here, over to Cantwell's and other places."

"Yes?"

"Old Cantwell had got mighty close, he said, and he reckoned there'd be an investigation."

"Fransway said all that, did he?" questioned Immerson, deeply impressed with what he heard.

"Yes, that's exactly what he said. I kinder jedged from his actions 'at Cantwell had got over the line and that there was goin' to be trouble."

Bidding the sawyers good morning Immerson walked away.

"By George!" he exclaimed, "this is getting interesting. "So it is my neighbor who has besmirched his garments. A nice piece of business to try to palm his own deviltry onto me. I'll see about this. Old Fransway will tell me the truth. I must see him."

Immerson was elated over what he had heard. He rode back to the shanties with a tote team, and hastened to the office. Densland, the old bookkeeper, was now in. The two talked for some time.

"It would be a good idea to see Fransway," agreed Densland. "He is as honest as the day, and would tell the facts if he opened his lips to talk."

"And he'll do that with me all right enough."

A rattle of wheels fell. Immerson turned to the door, which stood open. The day was proving mild, almost summery, and Densland was a stickler for fresh air in all sorts of weather. A buckboard approached bearing two men.

They were strangers to Immerson.

One of these dismounted at the door, a small chap with ferret eyes and grayish, close-cropped hair.

"Where can I find Immerson?" he asked.

"He's around somewhere," answered Walter with a peculiar smile.

"I was told that he was at this camp."

"Well, you might look about a bit——"

"Can't you help me out?"

"Don't think I can."

The lumberman stepped past his interlocutor. He did not attempt to go, however. There was a half-formed suspicion in his mind that led him to stand and inquire. He did this with his eyes, instead of by word or mouth.

"It's all right," said the man in the buckboard, a beefy fellow with wine-red face and watery eyes. "You are the man we want," indicating Immerson with a flourish of his whip. "put 'em on, Whiffers, and let's be goin'."

The speaker glanced furtively about. A lumber camp is not the safest place for even officers of law. There were, fortunately, no men in sight.

"I want you, Mr. Immerson," said the little man, whirling quickly. Something glittered in the sunshine. Then followed a click, and cold rings of steel encircled the lumberman's wrists. The fat man backed his superior by displaying a revolver.

"What does this mean?" demanded Immerson, choking with anger.

"It means that Furray is dead; you are wanted for his murder!"

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. It leads to very strange and fascinating situations. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

The Sultan's Name.

American and English newspapers have a way of mangling the name of the Sultan of Turkey. Often he is called simply "Abdul"—nothing more. Sometimes it is "Abdul the Artful," "Abdul the Wary." The proper way to write the name, according to the London Chronicle, is "Abd-ul-Hamid," or as some would transliterate it, "Abd-'l-Hamid." This means "Servant (or slave) of the promised one" i. e., God, or Allah. The "ul" or "'l" merely represents the Arabic definite article, which in writing is always joined to the following word.

"Abd" is a very common first name with Mohammedans, as in Abd-ul-Kadir, Abd-ul-Latif, Abd-ul-Aziz. "Abdul," with or without the Hamid, makes nonsense, but no one seems to notice it.

"On this principle George du Maurier might be called 'Georgedu' for short, and T. P. O'Connor would lose his nationality under the Italian-looking disguise of 'Thomaso.' "

When it comes to pulling wires the telegraph lineman can put it all over the politician.

BALLAD OF THE SHOP-GIRL.

By Ernest McGaffey.

The wolf of poverty follows me on
  Through the dingy streets of town;
So close beside that his shaggy hide
  Might almost brush my gown;
And after him thrust, the wolves of lust,
  Come, eager to drag me down.

And body and soul have a scanty dole
  From the pittance that I earn;
And cold as the breath of the wind of death
  Are the lessons that I learn;
With a pitfall dug for my weary feet
  And a trap at every turn.

And ever a tempter is near at hand
  To lure, with a Judas kiss,
And lead me away if be led I may
  To the depths of that black abyss,
Where in serpent guise old memories rise
  And over the fallen hiss.

I never may know surcease from woe,
  But I know of Fortune's frown;
I am one of a score of thousands more
  Who toil in the cruel town;
And the wolves of lust and of poverty
  Are waiting to drag us down.

And the Christ that the Bible teaches of
  For only men did die;
Or else he would heed in this dreadful need
  My bitter, despairing cry;
And the creeds always for the heathen pray
  And the Christians pass me by.

And many and fast the days whirl past
  While early I work and late;
And around my path for the aftermath
  The basilisk watchers wait;
And civilization bids me choose
  The grave, or a harlot's fate.

And I dread the light of tomorrow's dawn
  And the weight of the future years;
My life is blurred by a hope deferred
  And my heart is numb with fears;
And my hands that rise to the sullen skies
  Are wet with a woman's tears.

Alone I walk where the spectres stalk
  In the roar of the mighty town;
Oh! God, for a knight to aid my fight
  Of high and of pure renown;
Is there never a man to lift me up
  Where myriads drag me down?

FAMOUS FRENCH WIZARD.

BY LIEUTENANT MURRAY.

There are several of the older readers who have doubtless witnessed the performances of that famous French prestidigitateur, the late Robert Houdin. He was never excelled, and seldom equaled in his calling. He was well declared to be the prince of conjurers, for he elevated his occupation to a profession, and was an able mathematician and mechanician.

His ingenuity was unlimited, and it was absolutely impossible to detect the secret of his innumerable tricks and performances. Without the least assistance he would hold an audience in delight and amazement for hours, everything being done with a graceful facility which showed that Houdin absolutely enjoyed his business. He taught his son many of his original tricks, but never imparted them to others; while the secret of some of the most remarkable performances has died with their great master, and no one can ever hope to reproduce them.

Probably the first instance in which a conjurer has been called upon to exercise his profession in Government employ was that of Robert Houdin. He was sent to Algeria by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs to exercise the black art in that benighted country, hoping thus to destroy the influence exercised among the Arabs by the Marabouts, an influence which was often mischievously applied. By a few cunning, yet clumsy tricks, these Marabouts passed themselves off as sorcerers, and were held in fear and veneration by the ignorant tribes.

The French Government desired to show the Arabs that these would-be leaders among them were mere impostors, and that their pretended supernatural powers were without the least foundation in truth. The best way to do this it was thought would be to send one among them who should eclipse their skill, and then discredit their science and pretended powers. It was resolved to send Robert Houdin, and the wizard was ordered to appear at the Government office in Paris.

Houdin was a little puzzled to know what the Minister of Foreign Affairs could want of him.

The plan and purpose of the Government were made clear to him, and he entered with spirit into the idea and its successful application. With every facility and all needed protection Robert Houdin sailed for Algeria to astonish the natives.

Arriving under such favorable auspices, he went at once to work upon the object of his mission, and gaping crowds followed him everywhere, thinking him to be inspired. He succeeded in showing the people that he could vanquish the famous would-be prophets, who had obtained such control over the ignorant masses of the population, and thus threw them into such discredit that he succeeded in disarming them almost entirely of their influence.

Still there was one of the Marabouts whom he had not yet met, and who scoffed at the reported power of this French wizard. A day was therefore appointed when the two should appear before the people, and each give evidence of his own peculiar powers.

One of the great pretensions of the Marabout was to invulnerability. At the moment that a loaded musket was fired at him, and the trigger pulled, he pronounced a few cabalistic words, and the weapon would not go off. Robert Houdin instantly detected the trick, and showed that the touch-hole of the musket was carefully plugged. This rendered the Arab conjurer furious, and he, of course, abused his French rival without mercy.

Houdin was perfectly cool, and said:

"You are angry with me?"

"I am," said the Arab.

"And would be avenged?"

"Yes."

"It is very easy."

"Tell me the way."

"I will show you," said Houdin quietly.

The Arab was all attention.

"Take a pistol, load it yourself. Here are bullets. Put one in the barrel. But stop—"

"For what?"

"Mark the bullet with your knife, so that you may know it."

The Arab did as he was told.

"You are quite certain now," said Houdin, "that the pistol is properly loaded?"

"Yes."

"Tell me, do you feel no remorse in killing me thus, even though I consent?"

"No."

"It is strange."

"You are my enemy," he coldly answered, "and I will kill you!"

"Wait but a moment."

Houdin then stuck an apple on the point of a knife, and calmly gave the word, as he held the fruit raised in one hand:

"Fire!"

The pistol was discharged, the apple flew far away, and there appeared in its place, stuck on the point of the knife, the bullet the Marabout had marked. The spectators, though aroused to intense excitement of feeling remained mute with stupefaction, while the Marabout bowed before his superior, saying:

"Allah is great! I am vanquished."

Great was the triumph of the French wizard.

Houdin then called for an empty bowl, which he kept constantly full of boiling coffee, though but few of the Arabs would taste it, for they were sure that it was the devil's coffee-pot whence it came.

He then told them that it was within his power to deprive them of all strength, and to restore it to them at will, and he produced in illustration a small box, so light that a child could lift it with the fingers.

And now came their astonishment.

This box suddenly became so heavy that the strongest man present could not raise it, and the Arabs, who prize physical strength above everything, looked with terror upon the magician, who, they doubted not, could annihilate them by the mere exertion of his will.

The people expressed this belief, in which Houdin, of course, confirmed them, and promised that at a day appointed he would convert one of them into smoke. The day came, and the throng was prodigious. A fanatical Marabout had agreed to give himself up to the French sorcerer for the experiment.

The preparations were on a grand scale.

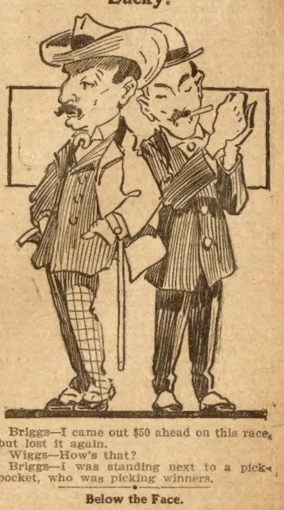
The Marabout was made to stand upon a table and was covered with transparent gauze. Then Houdin and another person lifted the table by the ends, when the Arab disappeared in a profuse cloud of smoke. The terror of the spectators was indescribable. They rushed out of the place, and ran a long distance before some of the boldest could make up their minds to return and look upon the Marabout. They found him near the spot where he had so mysteriously disappeared, but he could not answer their questions, he could tell them nothing at all, and only gazed wildly at them like one bereft of his senses. He was entirely ignorant of what had happened to him.

This was Houdin's closing exhibition in Algeria. He had filled the minds of the people with wonder, he was venerated by all, while the pretentious Marabouts were in utter disgrace; their influence was banished. He had met these conjurers on their own ground, and had in a most incredibly short time completely vanquished them.

The object of the French Government was completely attained, and Houdin returned to his home. He had made no pecuniary terms with the Minister of Foreign Affairs before obeying his orders, but so well satisfied was the Government with his remarkable success that besides paying all his expenses he was presented with a check upon the treasury for 50,000 francs.

Such is a single chapter in the life of a famous French wizard.

Lucky.



Briggs—I came out $50 ahead on this race, but lost it again.

Wiggs—How's that?

Briggs—I was standing next to a pickpocket, who was picking winners.

Below the Face.

Pearl—You kissed him?

Ruby—I did.

Pearl—I am more than surprised. You told me last week that you wouldn't kiss any man on the face of the earth.

Ruby—Oh, but that was below the face, dear. It happened in the subway.

Horace Whitlock's Sister;

Or, In Central American Jungles

By George Ethelbert Walsh, Author of "The Mysterious Burglar," etc.

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CHAPTER V.

THE complications of the situation dawned upon me with a flash, now that Belmont had stated the case in his roundabout way. I was familiar enough with Central American methods of despotic Governments to appreciate the difficulties facing me. Belmont's face showed satisfaction, and he gazed languidly at me through the clouds of hazy smoke. Circumstances had temporarily balked me in pursuit of the criminals, but I hardly thought I reflected the discouragement in my face which the consul's next words seemed to imply.

"The Circassia should be in port by this time," he drawled seductively. "She was sighted off the Capes before I left Porto Blanco. Shall we return in time to get a glimpse of her?"

"Will she wait?" I asked, looking up.

"Yes, I left orders to detain her twenty-four hours."

The words were barely out of his mouth before he regretted them. I laughed suddenly in his face. The blood slowly mounted to his bronzed cheeks, and an angry flash of his eyes showed that he resented my suspicion..

"I see the senor is inclined to doubt my words," he said in voice vibrating with suppressed emotion. "We'll go on to Berango and let the Circassia sail north."

He turned to pack our camp outfit—such as we could carry with us without the help of guides. I answered briefly as I helped him to prepare for the move:

"I think we'll go to Berango now."

Whether or not the story of the revolution was fiction, I was anxious to get within closer touch of my quarry, and to study conditions in the new republic at near range.

Belmont showed no disposition to hamper the preparations. He displayed unique skill in packing the few essentials for our trip, and referring to the others said:

"I'll send Muchado and Jose back to get these things. They'll only hamper us in the march."

Within twenty minutes we were ready to take up the journey, and Belmont, without a word, led the way through the thick swamp.

The trail was rough and trying, and wound through interminable thickets of swamp and upland forest, but my guide showed no hesitation in picking the right way. For an hour we trudged silently through the tropical woods. The morning mists were rising in clouds of vapor from stagnant pools and thick marsh. Innumerable screeching birds fluttered from thickets ahead of us, and slimy reptiles, basking in the sunshine, crawled sluggishly away or hissed noisy defiance at us.

When we finally reached an opening in the swamp, I caught the glimmer of water ahead. I uttered a grunt of satisfaction, and said:

"We're close to the coast."

"The senor deludes himself with the idea that this is the ocean," the consul said, with a slight sneer in his voice. "This is the Gulf or Berango, and off there we cross Berango River. The ocean is ten miles away."

"It is wide enough to suggest the ocean," I replied, sniffing the air as if to catch the odor of the salt from the sea winds.

"Here's where Durango ends," Belmont announced dramatically. "Over there is the new-born Republic of Berango. Shall we proceed, senor?"

"Yes, if we can cross. We have no boats."

"No, but around the bluff we'll find the mouth of the river, and it runs narrow and shoal a mile above. We may make a crossing there if the ford is not guarded by the armies of the two Republics. We should go slow now, for we're in the war zone, and a stray bullet is no respecter of persons or nationality."

I soon began to realize that his story of the revolution was no myth. At first we did not encounter any opposition or annoyance, but as we descended the bluff to the water's edge there was need for caution. The first touch of the water was cool and refreshing, but I did not have long to enjoy it. Belmont stepped softly into it, and remarked quietly:

"Now we'll draw the fire on both sides."

With the words still fluttering from his lips there came two sharp, singing "Zips! Zips" on the placid bosom of the river.

"Come, we must get beyond range," Belmont said quickly. "Those are loyal Durangan bullets. Over there we'll meet General Carolus and his enthusiastic followers. I hope his soldiers shoot no straighter."

Tiny leaden bullets continued to nip the water and send up little splashes of sun-flecked foam. The "zip, zip" of the angry pellets came uncomfortably close, but Belmost strode straight ahead through the river. I followed close behind, half inclined to dodge the annoying bullets, but kept from such action by my guide's indifference.

"Carolus will probably be puffed up with his victory," he remarked when half across the stream, "and he may be a bit unbearable, but we must stomach him for the cause."

It was a nerve-racking experience, crossing the shallow ford to the music of the pattering bullets, and we were considerably relieved when the spent missiles dropped harmlessly in our rear. The short range of the Durangan rifles indicated their ancient manufacture, and I was thankful that none of them carried modern long-range weapons that could wing us clear across the stream.

When we struggled up the opposite embankment of the river, a dozen soldiers in white cotton dress suddenly appeared out of the bushes and confronted us with menacing gesture. The leader of the rebels carried the distinguishing mark of a red silk sash slung across his shoulders. He approached with an air of welcome.

"Ah! Ze Americano Consul! He comes to greet ze new Republic of Berango. He is welcome!"

The rebel leader was recognized by Belmont, who responded cordially, but with blunt disregard of all diplomacy.

"Hello Manchuro! You leading this rebellion? I thought Carolus was engineering it."

"General Carolus is ze commando—ze leader—ze President," replied the officer with a bow.

"And you must be his Secretary of State or Minister of War?"

"Ze senor consul is disposed to flattery," replied the man with a more profound bow. "It is only Colonel Manchuro that salutes him."

"Ah, is that all the plum they gave you?" retorted Belmont with a grunt. "I'd hold out for something bigger, Manchuro. You're worth a minister's portifolio at least."

The light of a new ambition seemed to brighten the dull eyes of the Colonel, and one could almost read therein the dawning of another revolution in the interests of a new dictator.

"Ze Americano Consul thinks so?" he queried with another obeisance.

But Belmont having lodged his flattery in the right direction turned the conversation immediately, and asked:

"Where is Carolus now?"

"His Excellency is at ze capital with ze army and ze cabinet."

"What capital? Oh, the capital of the Republic of Berango? Where is that?"

"Ze city of Zarequa is ze new capital," replied Manchuro with pardonable pride.

"Zarequa? That isn't far from here, is it? About a mile down the coast on the Gulf?"

"Ze Americano Consul knows ze place."

"Yes, I've been there before, but if you can spare me a man for an escort I'd feel safer. Some kid with a rifle might take me for a spy from Durango in the present state of excitement."

"Ze consul can have ze escort with pleasure."

Colonel Manchuro turned and clapped his hands. A ragged soldier approached, and without removing his hat, waited for orders. A few words from the leader sent him off in haste, and when he returned he conducted our escort, a swarthy, but diminutive soldier whose rifle nearly touched the ground when he carried it over his shoulder.

Within a few minutes the parleying with Colonel Manchuro was finished, and we renewed our journey along the bank of the river until the waters of the Gulf appeared in the distance. When we finally rounded a wooded bluff we stumbled upon an encampment of soldiers on the beach, their white tents gleaming conspicuously in the sunlight.

Our escort advanced and talked with the guard on duty. The two exchanged words in their native language, and then the guard said in fairly good English:

"His Excellency is in ze capital with ze senor Americano."

The mention of another American in the capital instantly aroused me from my thoughts, and judging that I was close to my quarry, I said rather abruptly:

"Then we must be taken to him at once."

Belmont turned sharply and knitted his brows in irritation.

"Remember we're in the Republic of Berango," he said warningly, "and if you get yourself into trouble I may have no means to help you. This is a friendly visit of two Americans to the President of the new Republic, and not an official call."

I nodded comprehension and quietly left the negotiations for the present with him.

A ten minutes' walk brought us to the outskirts of Zarequa, the new capital of the virgin Republic. In one of the most pretentious buildings we found the headquarters of the new Government. We passed two rows of soldiers and a double line of sentries on duty. Then we were ushered into the presence of the dictator of the new Republic.

General Carolus was a short, squat man of swarthy complexion, with hair turning gray above a pair of sharp, ferret-like eyes. There were unmistakable signs of mixed blood in his veins, and his small, lithe hands were almost as delicately formed as those of a lady. The eyes burnt with fiery energy, but the brow suggested caution and sloth. The President was surrounded by half a dozen officers and assistants, who, I took it, formed his council of war and cabinet. I cast a restive glance around, hoping to see an American, but I was disappointed in my quest.

"Ze Americano Consul," greeted the President slowly, "is welcome in Berango if his mission is a peaceful one."

The man's caution and reserve were in contrast with Colonel Manchuro's greeting, but Belmont made no attempt to adapt his words or attitude to the requirements of the new situation.

"Carolus, you're a trump to kick up a disturbance like this and carry it through to success," he said heartily. "I never thought it of you. Why, you've got the richest province of the whole bunch in your possession. What is Durango without the rubber forests of Berango? Nothing but the tail without the dog. I congratulate you, General, for you can turn these rubber forests into good Americano gold."

"Ze rubber forests belong to ze State—to ze Republic of Berango," replied Carolus, with cautious words and a slight suspicious accent.

"Certainly, but the State can sell the land."

"With ze consent of ze Government and ze people."

There was a gleam of avarice in the eyes, which showed itself in spite of the man's quiet words. A few more sentences were exchanged, Carolus asking about Porto Blanco and how the news of the revolution had been received there, and Belmont assuring him that consternation reigned throughout all Durango.

Belmont was astute enough to refrain from any words which would irritate the President. Finally Carolus said:

"Ze Americano Consul must meet ze Secretary of State. He is an Americano, too."

These words sent a thrill through me, for I had little doubt that the American was either Whitlock or Farnley.

In this supposition I was not disappointed. After passing through a series of rooms we suddenly entered a spacious inclosure where a man was seated before a table. He was past fifty, but with a face well preserved and a figure adapted to rough life. He turned as we entered, and a shade of annoyance swept across his features.

"Ah, Mr. Farnley, we meet again," exclaimed Belmont, advancing with outstretched hands.

The brows darkened and the eyes, after staring sharply at the speaker, shifted uneasily toward me.

"This is ze Secretary of State," Carolus announced with dignity. "Senor Americano Farnley, ze——"

"Indeed!" interrupted Belmont. "Then accept my congratulations on your rapid rise in this country, senor Secretary. It takes an Americano to find the top of the heap in a hurry. I'm only surprised that you're not the President of the new Republic."

These words only added to the annoyance of the man, and he tried to smile in a deprecating way as he returned Belmont's greetings. When it came my turn he extended a hand, but turned to Belmont for an explanation.

"A friend of mine, Senor Farnley," was all the information given. I bowed and took the hand with feelings which are not easy to define.

In a slow voice James Farnley replied to Belmont's former remark, as if the purport of it had just reached his brain:

"I am indebted to my friend, General Carolus, for my position, and I trust I may prove worthy of the confidence bestowed upon me."

"Ze Secretary of State is modest," interposed the President of the young Republic. "He made ze way clear for me—made me see ze opportunity which delivered this suffering people from ze monster of Durango. He is ze—ze——"

"Ring-leader and chief backer of the gang," interrupted Belmont, with a grin. "That's the slang interpretation of it in English, I suppose, Senor Farnley?"

The man started a little at this blunt expression of his position, but he was too shrewd to show anger. He tried to force a smile to his lips, but it was a sickly attempt. It seemed to end in a scowl which had a sinister effect upon the hard face.

"An American is always lucky to happen down here on the eve of a revolution," Belmont continued easily, with the intention of dismissing the subject, "for he generally picks up something worth while and leaves the husks for the late comers. I suppose your specialty is rubber, Senor Farnley?"

"I have no interests in rubber, and wouldn't know the value of a forest if I had one."

"No, but Americanos are quick to learn, and sometimes concessions are of more value than the actual crop. If I had my choice I'd trade in concessions every time and let the other fellow work them. There is always the chance of getting them back and disposing of them to a newcomer. It's a poor Government down here that can't sell the rights to anything on the land or under the water twice within as many years."

I could see the restless, uneasy eyes of Farnley watching the speaker closely, and Carolus once or twice pricked up his ears and eyes. But when Belmont seemed to be treading close to dangerous ground, he turned cordially to the two men, and added:

"Well, let's smoke to the success of the new Republic of Berango! And to its new President, General Arturus Carolus, and the Secretary of State, James Farnley! May they long live and reign!"

He offered his cigarettes, and we smoked in peace until all suspicion seemed to have vanished from the faces of the two men.

CHAPTER VI.

Zarequa was a city of primitive homes, built on the shores of the Gulf of Berango. It was the chief seaport of the province, and the natural center of the rubber interests. It had a deep harbor and a well-sheltered roadstead, and once a year a steamer touched there to load up with the products of the forests.

Just at present it was a bustling scene. It was the pivotal city of the new Republic—both the capital and headquarters of the army of revolutionists. General Carolus had established his army on the outskirts of the city, and the motley array of tents added a picturesque note to the scene.

Zarequa had not chosen the honor forced upon it; it had not even been consulted in the matter. Many of its inhabitants were not sure that they enjoyed the new situation, for there is never honor without responsibility and sometimes danger. In this case it was the danger rather than the responsibility which its less warlike inhabitants did not like. Rumors were plentiful that the war was not over, but that the Durangan army was only temporarily held in check until a larger force could be concentrated near the only fordable place on the river. In the event of disaster to General Carolus, his army would retreat upon the city, and Zarequa would suffer for its temerity. The capital of the fledgling Republic would surely be punished the most for harboring the rebels.

President Carolus was a man of great ambition, but physically a coward. He had taken advantage of a strategic opportunity to declare the province an independent Republic and make himself nominally dictator. He was well fitted to play this role.

But it was apparent that another was furnishing the will and directing power which made the existence of the Republic even a possibility. Belmont and I were satisfied that James Farnley was the real head and the instigator of the revolution. He had found conditions ripe for a rebellion, and Carolus was like putty in his hands. He had lost no time in forcing the issue, and thus blocking all attempts to pursue and arrest him in his newly adopted country. Fear of pursuit may not have been his primary object in separating the province from the Republic of Durango, but as a secondary consideration it must have had weight in his shrewd plans.

"It's a shrewd move of Farnley's," I said when we were alone. "He scented danger, and knew how to protect himself. We can't extradite him so long as there's no treaty with the United States, and as Secretary of State he will see that no treaty is made."

"Carolus was a fool," exclaimed Belmont. "He can't hold out a month against General Dragonia's army."

"Then you think the Republic of Berango is of short duration?" I inquired anxiously.

"If there was only Carolus to deal with, I'd say yes. But Farnley is no fool. He's shrewd and a good schemer. He knows his danger, and depend upon it he hasn't burnt his bridges behind him yet. I'd like to know his plans for the future."

"We might checkmate him," I said thoughtfully. "If we made the right move, we might——"

Belmont stared inquiringly at me, and I concluded:

"I mean, if we could induce him to cross the river on some pretext we'd have him on the soil of Durango where he could be arrested."

"You'd never find him ready to accept such a bait."

"Then kidnap him and smuggle him across."

"Carolus is susceptible to the influence of American gold," I added finally. "He might deliver Farnley over to us for——"

"Don't depend on bribery until you know how high Farnley can raise the stakes," he interrupted. "He's got the first hold on Carolus, and any attempt at treachery may land us both in one of their foul military prisons."

The silence between us lasted several minutes. We both turned the matter over in our minds several times, and tried to view it from all possible angles. Belmont, after pacing the floor several times, stopped before me and said:

"What bothers me is Farnley's attempt to conceal Senor Whitlock and the beautiful senorita. What is his object unless——"

"Are they in Zarequa?" I asked quickly.

"Farnley makes no admissions—merely shrugs his shoulders, and assures me they are free to go where they please. He intimates that he knows little about their hiding place. The revolution separated them from him, and they are somewhere in the country. Just the same, I believe the scoundrel is lying."

"Do you suspect foul play?"

Belmont started at this query, and his face turned a shade paler. His eyes contracted, and nostrils dilated.

"Does it look so to you, senor?" he asked in a low, constrained voice.

"It looks suspicious, or least queer," I admitted slowly.

The American Consul resumed his nervous pacing of the floor, and finally exclaimed again with vehemence:

"Farnley is a villain, and I don't think he would hesitate at anything to carry out his own purpose. There is the money which you say they stole and brought down here, and the beautiful senorita!"

He stopped long enough to take a deep breath, and concluded: "We must find the senorita and her brother!"

I smiled at this declaration, for it seemed more impossible than kidnaping Farnley and smuggling him back to Durangan soil.

"Suppose Farnley had already disposed of them," I replied, "in order to get complete control of this stolen money."

"He'd never do that. He might kill Senor Whitlock, but not the senorita. She's too beautiful and lovely for a man—a brute—to harm. He would rather keep her—hold her for another fate. No, she is not dead, but we must find her."

The beads of perspiration appeared on his forehead, and twice he played a violent tattoo on the table with the unconsciousness of a man laboring under violent excitement. The situation was sufficient to cause anxiety, and Belmont, with his tender passion for Miss Whitlock, showed all the intensity of emotion of one greatly worried. He flung away a new cigarette, then recovered and re-lit it, but only to take a few spasmodic puffs.

"Senor Ardsley," he commenced, addressing me for the first time by name, "this is a common ground on which we meet, and we must work together. I'll admit that I used duplicity in conducting you to Berango, paying the guides to detain you in the swamps until I could get word secretly to Senorita Whitlock and her brother. I did not want her deported to answer some crime of her brother's, of which I was convinced she was innocent. If this revolution had not changed conditions, you may still have been in the swamps of Durango. I'll admit all that. But you must credit me with bringing you here, and of putting you in the way of securing your prize. But matters have now altered. An American woman in the hands of such a scoundrel as Farnley demands our pity and help. We must work together to rescue her. We must find her and her brother."

"That is my mission here," I replied with noncommittal brevity.

"Yes, your mission in a sense," he answered with a frown, "but there is a difference. I must get her out of danger first, and then——"

"We must join forces to circumvent Farnley," I interrupted.

"Yes, that is it. We must prove wiser and shrewder than he. I doubt not that we are braver and more accustomed to physical danger, but that doesn't always count."

"The treasure may supply the missing link," I suggested. "When we discover that we shall be pretty close to the trail of the others."

"I wonder if Carolus knows of the money," reflected Belmont in an undertone. "He has a great fondness for American gold. I wonder if we could not use it as a lever to pry open some of Farnley's secrets."

Then he added, with a smile of satisfaction: "Yes, we'll use that as a club for our friend Farnley. I'll speak to Carolus in secret about it. If we can stake him for half the treasure—it was two hundred thousand American dollars, you say—he may deliver Farnley over to us body and soul."

"You forget," I interposed briefly, "that the money is not ours to use for that purpose. It belongs to the International Rubber Corporation, and——"

"Oh, we can split ethical questions later," said Belmont with a tolerant smile. "When we get hold of the treasure we can discuss the morality of handing half of it over to Carolus. In the meantime the Durangan army under General Dragonia will be doing something."

He moved away as if well satisfied with his proposition.

I detained him with a hand on his arm.

"You understand the game of politics and war down here better than I do, but before we make a move to cooperate we should come to a clear understanding of our mutual interests."

"Well?" he said impatiently. "What now?"

"As you understand, I am here for definite purpose, and I cannot be turned from that by any sentiment. I'm not interested in your politics and revolutions. Carolus and his lot of rebels are nothing to me. I am here to arrest and deport Whitlock, his sister and Farnley, and if possible to recover the money they stole. I must work toward this end no matter whose interests are affected."

"You wish me to understand that you care nothing for the life and honor of a beautiful woman of your own country?"

"That is stating the case unfairly. The woman in this case happens to be a party to the crime."

"You honestly believe that?" snapped Belmont savagely.

Then in a quieter tone he added: "The circumstances are against her, but I shall never believe her guilty, not even by suggestion or knowledge."

"I hope your faith in the woman may be justified," I replied. "But you understand my position clearly."

"Our interests up to a certain point join," he replied slowly. "We agree to help each other until they become antagonistic."

"Exactly."

"Then I shall frankly say that if the time comes when it is necessary to pledge a part or all of this treasure to secure Senorita Whitlock's release, I shall do it without asking your permission. More than that, if necessary for this end, I shall oppose you to the extent of working with Senor Farnley to prevent harm to the senorita. Now shall we cooperate?"

There was defiance in the voice and words, but I liked the frankness with which he had defined his attitude. The eyes and face were a good index of his inflexible will and character. I knew that I could trust and depend upon him until complications made our aims divergent. I accepted the compact with a smile.

"There is no reason to anticipate trouble," I replied. "Until our paths separate let us be friends and work together."

"All right, senor, you'll find me ring true. I think we understand each other, and I trust we may never have occasion to lose confidence in each other. Meanwhile, I must hunt up Carolus, and bring some weighty matters of state to his attention."

CHAPTER VII.

Belmont stepped briskly from the room, but in the corridor he nearly stumbled into the arms of a dozen soldiers drawn up in line across the passageway. It was an unexpected surprise for both of us, and though we had spoken softly we instinctively wondered how much of our conversation had been overheard. The officer in command of the squad stepped a few paces forward and doffed his hat, dropping his lighted cigarette on the stone pavement.

"I didn't know we were honored with a guard," drawled Belmont, recovering himself instantly. "President Carolus is very considerate. Convey my compliments to His Excellency and inform him I crave an interview."

The officer grinned, showing pearly white teeth through his dark, struggling mustache.

"His Excellency—ze President of ze great Republic of Berango—sends his compliments and a message to his two friends," replied the man softly.

We stood expectant, waiting for the delivery of the message, but the officer showed no haste and took time to adjust his cap before continuing.

"His Excellency regrets ze great necessity of conducting ze two Americanos to a place of safety—to ze Island of Pines."

This information was not so startling in its import as if the man had announced our arrest, but it slowly dawned upon us that there was no great distinction between the two.

"His Excellency realizes what he is doing, I suppose," Belmont answered after a pause. "It is one thing to start a revolution against the Republic of Durango, and quite another to arrest an American Consul."

"Ze senor consul speaks bluntly," returned the officer with a shake of his head. "It is no arrest. It is ze safe conduct of ze two Americanos to ze beautiful Island of Pines."

"That's where you keep your political prisoners, I understand," uncompromisingly replied Belmont.

"It is a lovely island, and ze people there are content," was the evasive answer.

"You will take me to General Carolus first," bluntly commanded Belmont.

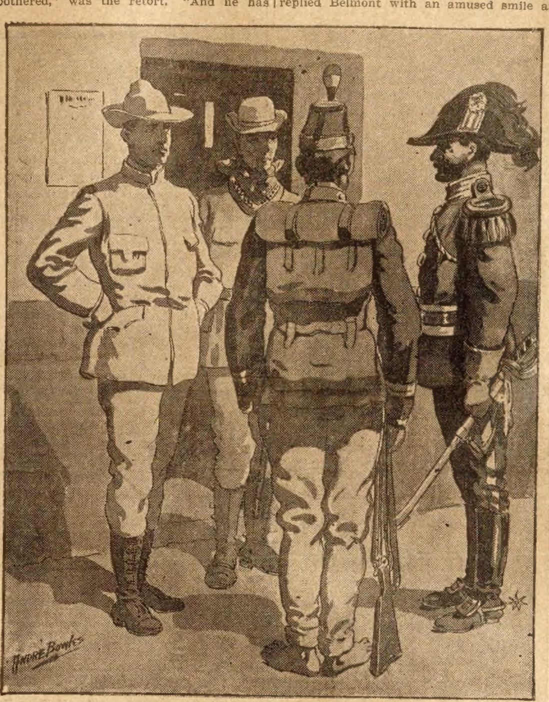
"It is unfortunate, but His Excellency is not in ze city. He's with ze army that meets General Dragonia."

"Then who gave orders to arrest us?"

"Ze order was left with ze Secretary of State. It is no arrest, but an order to detain you until the trouble is over."

"Then take us to Senor Farnley, your Secretary of State," said Belmont authoritatively. "He's an Americano, and I can explain to him."

"Ze Secretary is so busy he cannot be bothered," was the retort. "And he has such trust in his officers that he tells me not to report until ze Americanos are safe on ze lovely Island of Pines."



"You will take me to Gen. Carolus!"

Beneath the polite exterior we could read the officer's hidden meaning. Protest and resistance were useless. His orders were peremptory.

"What is your name, officer?" Belmont asked suddenly.

The man looked searchingly at the speaker, and for a moment his affable nature showed embarrassment. Then in a pompous manner he replied:

"Ze Americano Consul should know Colonel Mauritus—Colonel Jose Mauritus, of ze Berangan army."

His manner and announcement were lost on Belmont, who replied threateningly:

"Well, Colonel Jose Maritus, do you know what may happen to you if you arrest an American Consul? Do you know it is a crime against international law, and that within a fortnight you're likely to have enough warships in this port to wipe your little army of rebels out of existence? If you think anything of preserving your precious skin you'll hesitate before doing this, and conduct me to your Secretary of State or President Carolus."

The man's expression showed the effect of these words, and he nervously puffed at his cigarette. It was an unpleasant position for him. Before he could reply, I sought to add weight to Belmont's words.

"Do you know what sort of precious scoundrel your Secretary of State happens to be?" I asked. "Do you know he is a criminal and wanted in his own country?"

The wave of doubt and uncertainty increased on the perturbed officer's face. But gradually it cleared, and we saw that the decision was against us. He swept his hands in a circle over his head to indicate his helplessness. Before he could speak his thoughts Belmont addressed him once more.

"I don't suppose, Colonel Mauritus, that you happen to know of the treasure your Secretary of State stole from his country and brought down here. It is a pretty large sum—two hundred thousand dollars in American money. Government officers are on their way after this treasure and your precious Secretary of State."

A palpable change appeared in the dark face before us. The eyes were eagerly watching us, and a certain cupidity and craftiness contracted the brows.

"Ze Americano Consul knows where this treasure is?" he queried tactfully.

"No, I do not," confessed Belmont, watching the officer closely, "but I intend to find out. There is one missing link. Where is the beautiful senorita who accompanied your Secretary of State to Berango?"

"The American senorita is on ze Island of Pines," replied the man. "She lives there with ze other Americano. She is safe there, and ze Secretary of State keeps her away from ze bullets of ze enemy. And she is content."

We both started at this admission. The officer was not misleading us, and the location of Whitlock and his sister brought satisfaction to both of our minds. Belmont, with sudden submission to arrest, responded in a voice of resignation:

"I suppose, Colonel, any resistance on my part would be futile. You are determined to arrest and deport us to this Island of Pines?"

"Not arrest, but take ze Amercianos to ze place of safety."

"And if we should refuse to go?"

"Ze Americanos would not be so foolish. It would only make trouble for ze soldiers."

"I suppose it would make some trouble," replied Belmont with an amused smile at the half-grown men and boys sent to arrest us. "But if we go peacefully there will be no indignity offered us—no binding us like prisoners?"

"Ze Secretary of State gave no such orders, and ze Americanos can go with their hands free if they promise no resistance."

"Well, under the circumstances, it seems wiser to yield to the wishes of your Secretary. I give my word of honor not to make trouble."

"And ze other Americano?" turning to me.

"I have no desire to fight," I replied promptly, anxious now to reach the Island of Pines.

I understood Belmont's sudden change of tactics. I had come to about the same conclusion. If the Island of Pines was the hiding place for Miss Whitlock, it was also very likely where the stolen money was kept.

The soldiers, who had listlessly waited in line, now straightened up at a command from their officer, and stood ready for the word to march.

"How do we reach the island of safety?" asked Belmont, as he indicated his willingness to depart.

"Ze boat is waiting for us at ze dock. It is a pleasant sail across ze Gulf on such a beautiful day."

"Have you only one boat, Colonel?"

"There are two boats, senor, but ze big one is away. It is ze gunboat of ze new Republic."

Colonel Mauritus led the way, and Belmont and I followed close at his heels, with the ragged line of soldiers closing up the rear. Our appearance in the streets did not excite any particular attention. A few soldier-citizens stopped to look at us and mutter something in their native dialect.

"Political prisoners," I said with a smile. "I suppose our offence is not different from many others. It's inconvenient to happen in Berango at such a time of disturbance. I suppose there's no chance to make a break for liberty."

"I wouldn't try it," replied Belmont in an undertone. "There's no place to escape to, and these fellows have a lucky faculty of hitting things with their stray bullets at the wrong time. I've seen them shoot a volley at a target and never touch it, and then when some poor skunk of a prisoner escapes he's riddled with bullets. It's not because they aimed straight, but the prisoner unfortunately moved directly in the range of the flying bullets. A stationary target is safe, but a moving one is always in danger."

After passing through several winding streets, and crossing a wooden bridge, we approached the dock. A small tug, with steam up and a new flag drooping over the stern, was waiting for us.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was five miles across the Gulf—five miles of green and blue water which rippled and shimmered in the tropical sun. The Island of Pines rose abruptly from the bosom of the Gulf—a veritable paradise, with sandy beach and rocky bluffs, waving palms, acres of fragrant flowers and delicate air-plants, and a forest of stately pines ribbing the center. A few primitive mud and stone houses were scattered along the shore, and in the middle a long rambling, whitewashed structure which might have been erected for a prison or monastery.

"This is Carolus's last resort," Belmont reflected. "If General Dragonia defeats him he'll burn his bridges behind him and retreat to this island. It's pretty safe from attack."

"Is that his fortress?" I asked, looking at the large white building looming up ahead.

"It was an old monastery, but what use it is put to today is problematical. It is more than likely a prison."

The nearer we approached the island, with its central fortress-like building perched on the rocks, the less we enjoyed the outlook. Belmont cast uneasy eyes at the soldiers, and grew more absorbed in silent reflection. After all had we made a fatal mistake in yielding so complacently to Farnley's orders?

A few Berangan soldiers met us at the pier. They watched the approach of the tug with indolent curiosity. Colonel Mauritus stood ready as the boat was warped up to the end of the pier, and then politely invited us to land.

"This is ze beautiful Island of Pines. Could anything be lovelier? Ze Americanos will enjoy their visit here."

We stepped across the gang plank, and then Belmont turned to the officer.

"My dear Colonel, don't you land with us?"

"It would give me great pleasure to stay with ze Americanos," he replied, "but ze Secretary of State gave orders. I report to him. Ze Colonel Yetto will look after ze—ze Americanos."

For an instant Belmont stood as if uncertain whether to accept the situation or to make a forcible return to the boat. He seemed to fear a trick, and with sudden energy demanded:

"You said the Senorita Whitlock was on the island. Is that true or not?"

"It is true, senor. Ze beautiful senorita is on ze Island of Pines."

Belmont's anger subsided, but he asked again as the tug dropped away from the pier:

"What part of the island?"

There was no response. Colonel Mauritus waved his hand enigmatically. We watched him in silence, forebodings weighing uneasily upon our minds.

A burly halfbreed, clad in soiled uniform, stepped toward us, and said gruffly:

"Come with me! You're my prisoners."

We wheeled sharply in our tracks, but Belmont answered easily:

"Oh, no, senor, you're mistaken. We're only visitors here—detained for a few days until this flea-bite of a revolution passes. I want to investigate this little island. It's a gem for a watering place. Is that President Carolus's palace up on the rocks?"

I did not like the appearance of our new captor. He smiled sullenly at these words, but there was no attempt at any pleasantry or polite affectation.

"I'll show you the island," he answered shortly, "or that part of it which is prepared for you."

"Senor?" interrogated Belmont with rising inflection as the guard of soldiers closed in upon us.

"Colonel Yetto—Michel Yetto," was the response from the halfbreed.

"Yes, yes, of course. I should have known you at a glance, Colonel Yetto. You were under General Dragonia in the battle of Palm Creek. I remember the General praised you then for your gallantry."

These words of flattery had no perceptible effect upon the brutal face. Belmont slowly took appraisal of the new type of officer, and continued in quite a different voice:

"I suppose Carolus appreciates your bravery, too, and that's why he's selected you to guard his treasure island. It's quite a tempting sum of money to be responsible for."

Colonel Yetto evinced interest, but his features still retained their immobile expression.

"It's a fine place to hide the money," the speaker went on meditatively. "An outside enemy could not land here in the day time, and under the cover of darkness it would be no easy matter."

Yetto's lips opened, and he said with surprise in his voice:

"The Americano speaks strangely. What treasure is there on this island?"

Belmont started in well-assumed surprise.

"You don't know about it—the two hundred thousand dollars of American money? Didn't Carolus take you into his confidence, nor his Secretary of State?"

The officer scowled, and as Belmont turned his head away to indicate his intention of dropping the subject, the man blurted out angrily:

"There's no treasure on this island. The Americano is lying!"

"So be it, then," Belmont answered softly. "But you won't deny that the beautiful American senorita is kept here?"

(Continued on page ten.)

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GENTLE JABS.

Some charity begins and ends at home.

Two heads are better than one—at a kissing bee.

One cuff on the wrist is worth a dozen on the ear.

Kind words never die—and the other kind live forever.

It's hard to mend a bad break in your conversation.

The push button doesn't always ring the gong of success.

Our idea of a foolish man is one who argues with a friend.

There is a tax on stupidity; the smart chaps are tax dodgers.

A correct guess passes for wisdom, even though it is only a guess.

Many an indulgent husband allows the indulgence to stop with himself.

A coward manages to dodge a lot of things that are headed his way.

Blessed is the silent man, for he is able to keep the lid on his ignorance.

Introduce your enemies to your wife's relations and then forgive them.

A man isn't necessarily bashful because he declines to meet his obligations.

People waste a lot of time trying to obtain things they have no earthly use for.

A man doesn't realize how small the world is until he tries to dodge his creditors.

If a woman nags her husband it's up to him to supply her with plenty of cause.

The old bachelor is a prune in the human orchard and the spinster is a dried peach.

And the man who is really and truly in love doesn't lie to the woman in the case.

Many a man has lost money on a sure thing because he was afraid to take chances.

The sweet music children make in a home has nothing in common with piano lessons.

Don't antagonize a man with a cool million; he is in a position to make it hot for you.

Long before a woman acquires any jewels she likes to worry for fear they may be stolen.

In accord with the eternal fitness of things, the forger should use a steel pen in his business.

A bachelor says a mule is the most obstinate thing on earth, but married men know better.

Many a woman prides herself on her ability to understand things without giving them a thought.

What a splendid thing it would be if people who lose their tempers were unable to find them again!

The brain of an elephant is larger than that of a man, but his trunk is smaller than that of a woman.

Foreign titles come high—and a good many American heiresses have discovered that they were not worth the price.

Jessie of the SS Ranch

A Romance of the Wyoming Rangeland

By STEPHEN ANGUS D. COX

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CHAPTER IX.

THORNTON IS DISAPPOINTED.

CONNOR rode straight to the Star and Crescent Ranch. He went to the house and was soon in Thornton's library, making his report.

The rancher was disappointed.

"And he was too much for you, Connor?" he exclaimed when he had heard all. "I thought that you were the boss of the range."

"He's a boxer," growled the bully. "But, I'd have settled his hash, all right, with a bullet, if Boulson hadn't knocked the muzzle of my revolver up."

"I wish you had done so!" viciously.

"I'll git him yet!"

"You think you can?"

"I'm determined to do it, boss. I am not going to let the matter rest in this one-sided manner."

"Well, if you do, that two hundred is yours."

"All right."

They talked a while longer, and then Connor went out and back to his place among the other cowboys, who were amazed to see him back—and not any too glad, for they had hoped they were rid of him.

"Why did you come back?" asked the foreman.

"Oh, I didn't like it over on the SS Ranch, and thought I would come back here."

"But, I thought you had a racket with the boss."

"I did, but I went in and made it up with him, and he took me back."

"Ah, then you're back to stay, eh?"

"Yes, I reckon so."

The cowboys said nothing, but thought a good deal had they put their thoughts in words, there would have been war at once, for Connor would have been glad of a chance to fight some one, as a balm for the defeat that had been administered to him by John Spencer.

And while Connor was explaining matters to the cowboys, out in the bunk-house, Thornton, in the library, was frowningly pondering his agent's failure and wondering what he should do next.

"I'm afraid that fellow, Spencer, is winning his way into the regards of Jessie," he murmured. "And the worst of it is, that I don't know how I am going to keep him from doing so."

He decided that he would go over to the SS Ranch as often as possible, and do his best to hold his own against his rival. "Perhaps she won't really care enough for him to regard him as a suitor for her hand," was his thought. "I hope so, anyway."

The next time he went over to the SS Ranch was on Sunday, and Jessie consented to go riding with him. She seemed to be in a more than ordinary good humor, and Thornton noted this, and was glad.

"Perhaps she has made up her mind that she doesn't care for Spencer, after all," was his thought. "And if that is the case, my chances may be good to win her."

"You seem happy this morning, Miss Jessie," he said.

"I am feeling in good spirits, that is a fact," was the reply.

"May I ask what has caused this?"

"Yes, I'll tell you what has caused it: I am to have a girl companion here on the ranch in a few days."

"Ah, indeed. Who is the girl?"

"A Miss Gertrude Spencer, from Chicago. She is Mr. Spencer's sister."

"Oh!" Thornton's heart went down like lead in his bosom. John Spencer's sister was coming! And Jessie was glad! This meant that she would be thrown more into the society of Spencer, and the rancher almost groaned aloud. It was a hard blow for him.

"How long will she stay?" he asked, after a few moments.

"Oh, as long as she wishes to—all summer, perhaps."

Worse and worse. Thornton realized that Spencer's chances to get into the good graces of Jessie would be immeasurably greater after the arrival of his sister, as she would naturally want him to be where she was, as much as possible, and, of course, that would throw him into the society of Jessie a great deal.

"You must come over and make her acquaintance when she comes, Mr. Thornton," said Jessie.

"Certainly; I shall be pleased to do so," Thornton replied. "When will she arrive?"

"Day after tomorrow."

Thornton did not enjoy the drive to any great extent, after that. His thoughts were on what he had just learned, and he was turning the matter over and over in his mind and trying to figure out just what it meant to him.

Jessie, made lighter-hearted and more lively by the thought that soon she would have a companion of about her own age, talked spiritedly and was lively and jolly; but Thornton could not rise to the same heights, much as he would have liked to, for what was making the girl happy was having just the opposite effect with him.

He did the best he could, however, and on getting back to the ranch-house, about half-past eleven, he accepted Jessie's invitation to stay and take dinner with them.

But just as he was taking his departure, he saw John Spencer come riding up to the ranch-house, and his face grew dark with rage and jealousy.

"Blast the fellow!" he murmured; "here he is, and I suppose that they will go horseback-riding. I wish that I had asked her to ride over to my ranch and see sister, and then I would have had her away when he got here."

But it was too late now. Spencer was close at hand, and so Thornton drove onward with a cool nod and a cold "How are you?"

"Blast that fellow; how I hate him!" he gritted, when he was past his rival.

When he reached his ranch, Connor came and took the team.

"See anything uv Spencer?" he asked.

"Yes, he came up as I was leaving the SS Ranch," was the reply.

"Humph. I s'pose he'll likely stay there till after supper."

"Likely."

Connor said no more; but about five o'clock he saddled his best horse, mounted and rode away. To his comrades, who asked where he was going, he said that he was going for a ride.

"Sunday's a slow day fur me," he declared. "I must git out an' ride a bit."

He rode several miles, and then, just as it was beginning to grow dark, he stopped and dismounted and led his horse into a strip of timber that bordered a little creek, and tied him to a tree. Then he went back to the edge of the timber, and sat down with his back against a tree, and rolled and lighted a cigarette.

"He'll shorely go past here," was Connor's muttered comment; "an' if he does—"

He did not finish the remark, but there could be no doubt regarding his intentions.

It was his plan to lie in wait till Spencer came along, and then shoot him down.

CHAPTER X.

THE AMBUSH.

Spencer was on his way home at half-past nine o'clock. It was ten when he reached the vicinity of the spot where Connor was lying in ambush.

Of course, Spencer did not suspect that he was in danger. There was no reason that he should do so. Consequently the first intimation he had that he was threatened was when there came a sharp report, and a bullet whistled past his ear.

He came out of his dream—he was thinking of Jessie—in a hurry, and gave a quick glance in the direction from which the shot had sounded, while his hand leaped to the butt of his revolver.

He caught sight of a man standing in the edge of the timber, and quick as a flash he drew his revolver, leveled it, and fired. The man in the edge of the timber fired again, at the same moment, the two reports sounding as one. Spencer was not hit, but a yell of pain came from the would-be assassin, and he turned and fled back in among the trees.

"Well, that was rather a close call!" thought Spencer. "I wonder who the rascal was, anyhow?"

He thought of getting down and following the fugitive, but decided not to do so.

"Probably I couldn't catch him," was Spencer's thought; "and even if I did, I wouldn't know what to do with him. No, let him go."

So he rode on to camp, where he told about the affair, the cowboys listening with interest.

"I'll bet it was Connor!" said Dave Benton.

"Do you think so?" queried Spencer.

"It's almost a dead certain thing," said Jim Hardy.

"I think so, too," declared Bob Boulson. "And you must have hit him pretty hard, or he wouldn't have skipped out."

"He yelled like it had hurt him a bit," said Spencer.

"It wouldn't be much loss if you gave him his everlasting," said Dave Benton.

"I hope that he is bad enough hurt so that he won't feel like trying that plan over again," said Boulson.

Spencer said that he hoped so, too.

"It isn't very pleasant to have some one pop at you from ambush, as you are riding quietly along, never thinking of danger," he declared.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Connor was pretty hard hit. The bullet from Spencer's weapon had hit him in the chest, and had taken all the fight out of him. His only thought, on receiving the wound, was to get away before he received another.

So he fled back into the timber, and stood leaning against a tree, listening intently; and when he heard Spencer ride on, he gave vent to a muttered exclamation of satisfaction and relief.

He waited a few moments, and then untied his horse, mounted with difficulty and rode away in the direction of the Star and Crescent Ranch.

"I don't know whether I kin git there or not," was his thought; "but it's my only chance."

He did finally reach the ranch, and had just strength enough left to call the boys out of the bunk-house. He fainted, then, from loss of blood and would have fallen from the saddle, had they not lifted him out and down.

They carried him into the bunk-house and laid him on his bunk.

"He's bad hurt," said one.

"Yas, somebuddy has salervated 'im, all right," from another.

They began working at their comrade, and presently succeeded in bringing him back to consciousness; but he either was too weak to talk, or else didn't want to do so, for they could get nothing out of him.

One of the cowboys had studied medicine in the East, before coming out to the rangeland, and he dressed the wound.

"It's going to be a close call for Connor," he said, with a shake of the head. "But, he may pull through."

Next day, when the boys were away at their work, Thornton went to the bunk-house and had a talk with Connor.

The cowboy explained matters, briefly, for he was very weak, Thornton listening with a frown of disappointment on his face.

"You think you missed both times, Connor?" the rancher asked.

"Yes, I don't think I hit him."

"What was the matter with you? You are usually a pretty good shot."

"I don't know. Maybe I was so eager that it made me nervous. I wanted to settle him, ye know."

"Yes; well, I wish you had done so."

"So do I."

Thornton went back to his room in the ranch-house and sat and smoked and pondered, a dark look on his face.

"I'm afraid that fellow Spencer is going to get the better of me, after all," was his thought. "I counted on Connor being able to handle him, but he has failed. Well, I will have to do something, myself, I suppose; though what I can do is more than I can say, at the present time."

His sister saw that something was wrong, and tried to find out what it was, but received no satisfactory replies to her questions.

Donald Thornton was not a pleasant man to have around when he was out of humor, and his sister was glad when he mounted his horse and rode away, about two o'clock.

"It's that girl over at the SS Ranch," was Miss Thornton's decision. "I wish Donald would give her up. She doesn't care for him, I'm certain; and the longer he keeps after her, the worse it will be for him."

But Donald Thornton was not a man to give up, until he saw positively that there was no hope for him.

CHAPTER XI.

THORNTON BECOMES DESPERATE.

Gertrude Spencer arrived at the SS Ranch on the expected date, and was given a cordial reception by Mr. and Mrs. Simcoe and Jessie. The girls were about the same age and took a liking to each other instantly.

"Oh, we'll have just the jolliest times in the world!" declared Jessie, her eyes shining. "You ride, do you, Gertrude?"

"Oh, yes; but I fear that I shall not dare try to ride those bucking bronchos that I have heard so much about."

"Oh, we have gentle horses. We'll go riding this very day. It is the greatest sport in the world."

"I should think it would be great sport to ride swiftly across these great prairies," said Gertrude. "I can begin to understand why it is that brother likes it so well out here." There was a mischievous light in her eyes as she spoke, and her eyes were on Jessie's face.

Jessie colored slightly, and began talking rapidly about the delights of life on the range.

"You'll like it, I'm sure," she declared.

"Oh, I don't doubt it at all," was the reply. "But, where is brother? I supposed he would be here to greet me."

"He is away with his outfit; but they will be back this evening."

When evening came, Spencer arrived, and he gave his sister a hearty greeting, indeed.

"How do you like it out here, sis?" he asked.

"Oh, first rate, so far, Jack. But I fear that I shall never like it quite so well as is the case with you," and she gave another flashing, mischievous glance at Jessie, who colored slightly, and turned quickly so that her back was toward Spencer for a few moments. When she turned back again, her face had resumed its normal color and she was calmness and composure personified.

Spencer took supper with the Simcoes and his sister, and spent the evening with them, and a very pleasant evening it was, too.

Next day he went riding with the girls, and on their way back to the ranch-house they were joined by Bob Boulson, to whom Spencer introduced his sister.

Now, Boulson was a handsome fellow of twenty-four years, and Gertrude at once took a liking to him. They rode beside each other, and were soon talking and laughing as freely as if they had known each other all their lives.

Spencer and Jessie seemed to be enjoying themselves very well, too, and they laughed and talked quite as animatedly as was the case with the other two.

When the girls were in the ranch-house, Gertrude said, vivaciously:

"Oh, it's just fine, out here, Jessie! I am going to like it splendidly, I know."

"Perhaps you may like it out here fully as well as is the case with your brother, after all!" said Jessie, with a quizzical smile.

Gertrude colored slightly, and then laughed and shook her finger at her friend, in mock anger:

"I guess you're even with me, now, aren't you!" she said.

"Pretty nearly," with a smile.

"I rather think that I shall stay here the rest of the summer," said Gertrude; "that is, if you folks will keep me," she added, with a laugh.

Jessie threw her arms around the other and gave her a hug and a kiss.

"We will be only too glad to keep you!" she declared. "It is going to be a treat to me to have you here."

A few days later Boulson's outfit was sent away out to the foothills of the Big Horn Mountains, with a big bunch of cattle, and the girls had to do their riding without escort. But Jessie was a rangeland girl, and was not afraid, and they rode many miles each day, in various directions, and enjoyed themselves hugely.

On Sunday Donald Thornton drove over from the Star and Crescent Ranch and asked Jessie to go riding with him. She hesitated, but presently decided to go.

"But I will make it the last time," she said. "This must end it, for I can never be his wife. The longer I let him go on, the worse it will be for him. I shall tell him, kindly and gently, today, that he must not come here any more."

She got ready and they were soon speeding along behind the bays. She enjoyed a spin in a runabout, but after all it was not so exhilarating or pleasing as a dash across the prairie on horseback.

As Jessie expected, Thornton pressed his suit, as he had done so often before; only, this time, he was more energetic and insistent than he had ever been before.

She listened patiently, and then told him, gently, but firmly, that it could never be.

"I do not love you, Mr. Thornton," she said; "and I never could learn to love you. I am sorry, but it is the truth, and so from today, you must stay away from the S S Ranch. It will be better for you to do so, as seeing me will keep your liking for me alive all the longer, to no avail in the end."

"It's that blasted Spencer that has done this!" hissed Thornton, his face dark with rage. "If he had stayed away from here, I would have won you, sooner or later."

"No, you are mistaken," said Jessie, her face coloring up in spite of herself. "I could never have loved you, Mr. Thornton, and I would not have married without love."

"Spencer is to blame for it all!" Thornton declared, viciously. "And I am going to have revenge on him! He shall never marry you! You have got to marry me, or no one! I swear it!"

Jessie stared at her companion in amazement, not unmixed with horror.

"You are talking wildly, Mr. Thornton," she said, coldly. "Kindly turn around and take me home."

"I'll do nothing of the kind!" wildly. "I am going to take you to a place I know of, up in the mountains, and keep you there till you agree to marry me! You shall be my wife, I tell you!"

He whipped up the horses and headed toward the Big Horn Mountains.

"Mr. Thornton—you are acting foolishly!" cried Jessie. "Take me home at once."

"I will not!"

"Surely you don't mean what you have just said!" remarked Jessie, gazing at her companion in consternation.

"I do! I am going to take you to a cabin I know of, up in the mountains, and keep you there till you are willing to marry me!"

"Then you'll have to keep me there always!" was the reply.

Jessie kept on talking and remonstrating, but it did no good. Her companion was evidently in earnest, and he drove at such a swift pace that it would have been dangerous for her to try to leap out. And, anyway, he kept an eye on her, as if suspecting her of some such intention.

Presently they came to a strip of timber that bordered a stream, and just after they had crossed the stream, and were rounding a bend in the road, they came face to face with John Spencer, who was riding toward them on horseback.

"Oh, John—Mr. Spencer! Save me!" cried Jessie. "Make Mr. Thornton take me back home!"

CHAPTER XII.

SPENCER WINS.

"What's this?" cried Spencer, in amazement, his face growing stern. "What does this mean, Mr. Thornton?"

"It means that you are going to die right here!" snarled Thornton, starting to draw a revolver.

But Spencer was too quick for him, and had his revolver out and leveled before the other could get his weapon out of his pocket.

"Put that pistol back!" Spencer cried, sharply. "I don't want to hurt you, but I will do so, unless you obey me!"

Thornton glared a few moments, and then returned the revolver to his pocket, slowly and reluctantly.

"That's sensible," nodded Spencer. Then to Jessie he continued: "What is the trouble, Miss Simcoe?"

"Why, Mr. Thornton was going to take me to a cabin up in the mountains," she said; "and keep me there till I promised to marry him," and she laughed nervously and half-amusedly.

Spencer frowned and regarded Thornton with scorn.

"You are a fine specimen, truly!" he said, contemptuously. "By rights I ought to shoot you dead!"

"Oh, don't do that, Mr. Spencer!" cried Jessie. "He—he—I don't believe that he knew what he was doing. If he will take me back home, I will be satisfied. I don't want any harm to come to him."

"In deference to Miss Simcoe's wishes, I will permit you to get off without punishment," said Spencer. "Turn your team and drive straight back to the S S Ranch; then go home—and stay there!"

Without a word, Thornton obeyed. And without a word he drove all the way to the S S ranch-house, Jessie sitting quietly beside him, looking straight ahead; and behind them rode Spencer, keeping a sharp eye on Thornton, for he did not trust the rancher at all.

Thornton had no intention of trying any tricks, however. He felt that the game was up, and that he was exceptionally lucky in being permitted to get off so easily.

When the ranch-house was reached, Jessie leaped to the ground before Thornton could alight to assist her, and still without a word, he whipped up his horses and drove away at a reckless pace.

Spencer leaped from his saddle, and approached Jessie, who looked at him with gratitude, and said, earnestly:

"Oh, I am so glad that you happened to meet us, John—Mr. Spencer!"

"John," he said, smiling.

"Well, John, then," smiling and blushing.

"And I am more than glad, Jessie!" he said, earnestly. "I cannot tell you how delighted I am that I was on hand at the right moment."

Just then Gertrude came running out, with mischief in her eyes, and cried out:

"Here, what are you two talking about so earnestly? And why, Jessie, did Mr. Thornton drive away in such unseemly haste?"

Spencer laughed, and said:

"You are too inquisitive, sis. You mustn't ask so many questions."

"Never you mind; Jessie'll tell me—won't you?" placing her arm around her friend's waist and giving her a hug.

"Yes, I'll tell you," said Jessie, and with a flashing glance at Spencer that set his heart throbbing with happiness, because of something he saw there, she went into the house with Gertrude, where she did tell all, causing her friend to give many exclamations of amazement at the audacity of Donald Thornton.

"He is a villain, sure enough!" exclaimed Gertrude, when she had heard all.

"I'm afraid you are right, Gertie," was the reply; "well, I am glad to think that he will not bother me any more with his attentions."

"Certainly he will not do so. He would not dare, after what he did today."

Spencer came in presently, and was given a cordial greeting by Mr. and Mrs. Simcoe. Nothing was said to Jessie's parents about the action of Donald Thornton. It was thought best to let them remain in ignorance of the affair.

Spencer and the two girls went riding that afternoon, and enjoyed themselves hugely. The young man stayed till after supper, on their return to the ranch-house, and then set out for the camp in the foothills.

He was happy, very happy—for he had that day made a discovery, a most pleasing, joyous discovery: Jessie Simcoe loved him. Yes! there could be no doubt about it! Her eyes had told him so, and he felt sure that her lips would repeat the statement at the proper time. So why should he not be happy?

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Our story is practically ended.

Donald Thornton sold his ranch and left the country. Jessie never set eyes on him after that day he attempted to kidnap her.

Gertrude Spencer stayed on the S S Ranch all summer, and when she returned to Chicago, she was the promised wife of Bob Boulson. They were to be married in the spring.

But before she went back, her brother John and Jessie Simcoe were married. And a few days later a deed to the S S Ranch came to John as a wedding present from his father.

"Now that you have a wife, you need a home of your own," wrote Mr. Spencer; "and as I think it likely that you will be happier and do better out there than in business here in Chicago, I hereby make you a present of the S S Ranch."

"Generous old dad!" said Spencer; "he knows that I will be more successful as a rancher than as a business man in Chicago. Well, I'd rather live here than in the city, wouldn't you, dear?"

"Yes, John," replied Jessie, her face alight with happiness; "I could be satisfied anywhere, with you, but I know, too, that I can be happier right here on the dear old ranch than anywhere else in the world."

"That settles it," smiled John. "We'll go down to Chicago and spend a few weeks with the old folks, each winter, but our permanent address will be, 'The S S Ranch, Wyoming.' "

The end.

Good News for the Deaf.

A celebrated New York Aurist has been selected to demonstrate to deaf people that deafness is a disease and can be cured rapidly and easily in your own home. He proposes to prove this fact by sending to any person having trouble with their ears a trial treatment of this new method absolutely free. We advise all people who have trouble with their ears to immediately address Dr. Edward Gardner, suite 313, No. 40 West Thirty-third street, New York City, and we wish to assure them that they will receive by return mail, absolutely free, a "Trial Treatment."

Information Wanted.

An American, while visiting Kingston, Can., recently saw flames issuing from a house he chanced to be passing at noontime. Rushing round the corner, he burst into a fire-engine station, shouting "Fire!"

At his entrance and cry an old man, the only occupant of the station, who sat reading a newspaper, slowly rose, carefully deposited his paper on the chair, and hobbled over to a desk, on which was a large book. "Now," said he, taking up a pencil and opening the volume, while the American stared in amazement, "Wot's the street and number?"

"I don't know, but it's just around the corner!"

"Well, you'd better go back and find out the number," advised the old man, shutting the book. "When the boys git back from dinner and hear there's a fire, they'll be pretty anxious to know just where it is!"

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhœa, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

FROM OBSERVATION.

"'Tis hard to say good-by,"
The poets often write;
But it seems to us when young men call
On maids and linger in the hall
It is harder to say "Good-night!"

HOW HE FOOLED HER.

Bungay, the real-estate agent over at Pencader, suspected that Mrs. Bungay didn't care as much for him as she ought to. So one day he went up to the city after leaving word that he would be gone two or three days. While there he arranged with a friend to send a telegram to his wife at a certain hour announcing that he had been run over on the railroad and killed. Then Bungay came home, and slipping into the house unperceived, he secreted himself in the closet in the sitting-room to await the arrival of the telegram and to see how Mrs. Bungay took it. After awhile it came, and he saw the servant girl give it to his wife. She opened it, and as she read it she gave one little start. Then Bungay saw a smile gradually overspread her features. She rang for the girl, and when the servant came Mrs. Bungay said to her:

"Mary, Mr. Bungay has been killed. I've just got the news. I reckon I'll have to put on black for him, though I hate to give up my new bonnet for mourning. You just go round to the milliner's and ask her to fetch me up some of the latest styles of widow's bonnets, and then bring the undertaker here."

While Mrs. Bungay was waiting she smiled continually, and once or twice she danced around the room, and stood in front of the looking-glass, and Bungay heard her murmur to herself:

"I ain't such a bad-looking woman, either. I wonder what James will think of me."

"James!" thought Bungay, as his widow took her seat and sang softly, as if she felt particularly happy. "Who'n in thunder's James? She certainly can't mean that infamous old undertaker, Toombs? His name's James and he's a widower; but it's preposterous to suppose that she cares for him, or is going to prowl after any man for a husband as quick as this."

While he brooded in horror over the thought, Mr. Toombs arrived. The widow said:

"Mr. Toombs, Bungay is dead; run over by a locomotive and chopped all up."

"Very sorry to hear it, madam; I sympathize with you in your affliction."

"Thank you; it is pretty sad. But I don't worry much. Bungay was a poor sort of a man to get along with; and now that he's gone I'm going to stand it without crying my eyes out. We'll have to bury him, I s'pose, though?"

"That is the usual thing to do in such cases."

"Well, I want you to tend to it for me. I reckon the coroner'll have to sit on him first. But when they get through, if you'll just collect the pieces and shake him into some kind of a bag and pack him into a coffin, I'll be obliged."

"Certainly, Mrs. Bungay. When do you want the funeral to occur?"

"Oh, most any day. P'rhaps the sooner the better, so's we can have it over. It'll save expenses, too, by taking less ice. I don't want to spend much money on it, Mr. Toombs. Rig him up some kind of a cheap coffin, and mark his name on it with a brush, and bury him with as little fuss as possible. I'll come along with a couple of friends, and we'll walk. No carriages. Times are too hard."

"I will attend to it."

"And, Mr. Toombs, there is another matter. Mr. Bungay's life was insured for about twenty thousand dollars, and I want to get it as soon as possible, and when I get it I shall think of marrying again."

"Indeed, madam!"

"Yes; and can you think of anybody who'll suit me?"

"I dunno. I might. Twenty thousand, you say he left?"

"Twenty thousand—yes. Now, Mr. Toombs, you'll think me bold, but I only tell the honest truth when I say that I prefer a widower, and a man who is about middle-age, and in some business connected with cemeteries."

"How would an undertaker suit you?"

"I think very well, if I could find one. I often told Mr. Bungay that I wished he was an undertaker."

"Well, Mrs. Bungay, it's a little kinder sudden; I haven't thought much about it; and old Bungay's hardly got fairly settled in the world of the hereafter; but if business is business, and if you must have an undertaker to love you and look after that life-insurance money, it appears to me that I am just about that kind of a man. Will you take me?"

"Oh, James, fold me to your bosom!"

James was just about to fold her when Bungay, white with rage, burst from the closet, and exclaimed:

"Unhand her, villain! Touch that woman and you die! Leave this house at once, or I'll brain you with the poker! And as for you, Mrs. Bungay, you can pack up your duds and quit. I've done with you; I know that you are a cold-hearted, faithless, abominable wretch! Go, and go at once! I did this to try you, and my eyes are opened."

"I know you did, and I concluded to pay you in your own coin."

"That's too thin. It won't hold water."

"It's true, anyhow. You told Mr. Magill you were going to do it, and he told me."

"He did hey? I'll bust the head off of him."

"When you are really dead I will be a good deal more sorry, provided you don't make such a fool of yourself while you're alive."

"You will? You will really be sorry?"

"Of course!"

"And you won't marry Toombs? Where is that man Toombs? By George, I'll go for him now! He was mighty hungry for that life-insurance money! I'll step around and kick him at once while I'm mad. We'll talk this matter over when I come back."

Then Bungay left to call upon Toombs, and when he returned he dropped the subject. He has drawn up his will so that his wife is cut off with a dollar if she employs Toombs as the undertaker.

Grand Mixture.

Stubb—I often read about the Japanese diet. Wonder if there is a Chinese diet?

Penn—Sure! Chop suey.

No Watered Stock.

The "get-rich-quick" stock broker was worried.

"I fear it is only a matter of time when they will run me off the earth," he sighed.

"But cheer up," hastened the bosom friend. "If they run you off the earth why not open up an office on Mars?"

The bubble broker shook his head.

"What would be the use?" he sighed. "There is no water on Mars."

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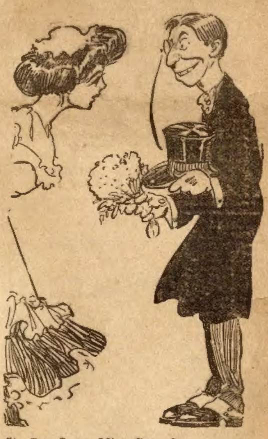

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It—I know it. I'm what she's engaged to.

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Assistant—Those were almost my very words.

Great Editor—Good! Quick as the edition is on the street, I'll hustle around and see if I can borrow enough to pay your salary.

Off for the Woodshed.

"Great Scott!" snorted the irritated old gentleman, as he dropped his paper, "what is all that noise in the library?"

"It's me, grandpa," responded Tommy. "I'm playing I am a ship pounding in the surf."

"Playing you are a ship, eh? Well, young man, I think you need a spanker."

And the next moment grandpa was slipping off his slipper.

A Day of Rejoicing.

Stranger—I notice this handsome apartment-house is illuminated, and there are sounds of revelry within. What is it? A grand wedding?

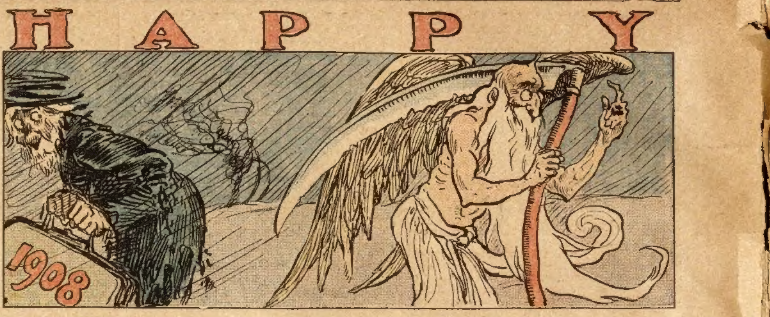
Resident—No, sir. The janitor's funeral.

Ostend—Pa, what is the "Suburban Handicap?"

Pa—The lawn mower in the summer and the snow shovel in the winter, my son.

His Wife—Don't you think my new hat is a poem, dear?

Her Husband—Judging from its height, I should say it looked more like a short story.



HIS LOSS.

He had no use for knockers,
Only optimists could win;
And when Opportunity knocked one day—
He wouldn't let her in.

All Sorts.

Customer—What's the price of butter?

Grocer—Different prices, accordin' to quality. Do you want it fer eatin', cookin', er greasin'?

Rather Strenuous.

"Stop this instant!" exclaimed the old lady as she passed the crowd of bad boys on the lot. "What do you mean by punishing that poor little boy?"

"We ain't punishing him, ma'am," grinned the leader of the gang.

"But you are standing him on his head until he is black in the face."

"Dat ain't nuttin'. We are going to give a show in old man Dooley's back yard and we need a black-face comedian."

A Truthful Answer.

"How came you here, my man?" said the lady who was distributing tracts in the prison to convict No. 41144.

"I was brought here by my convictions, ma'am," replied the man behind the bars.

Eclipse.

Gunner—Fogg certainly loves his wife. He actually wears the neckties she makes him.

Guyer—Yes, but Harker goes that one better.

Gunner—Yes?

Guyer—I should say so. He wears the red mittens his wife knitted.

The Cause of Trouble.

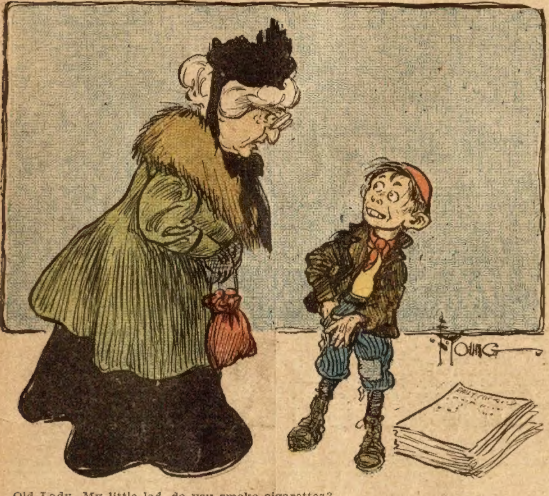
"In your opinion," asked the member of the investigating committee, "what is the cause of the evident unrest among the Indians?"

Comanche Pete, the noted scout, blew a cloud of smoke into the atmosphere.

Then he took his pipe out of his mouth.

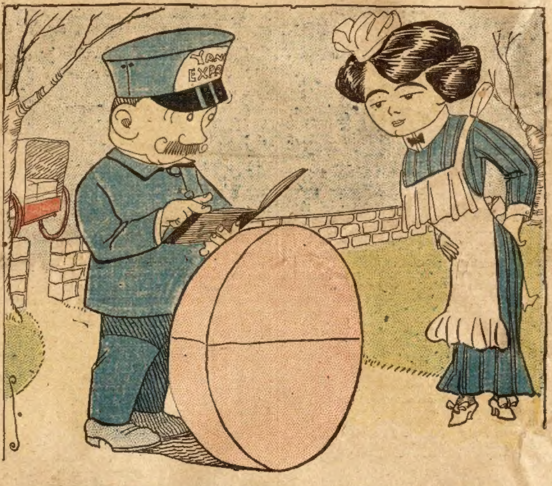
"Fleas," he answered.

AWFUL.



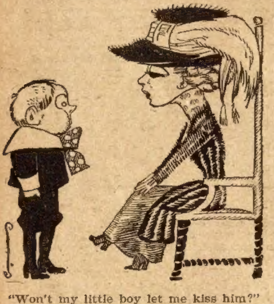
Old Lady—My little lad, do you smoke cigarettes?
Boy—No; but I can give yer a chew of tobacco.

FOR THE LADY OR AUTO.



Expressman—I don't know whether this comes here. The address is indistinct.
Housemaid—I guess it's all right. It's either a new tire for the auto, or a new hat for the missus.

Brave Youth.



"Won't my little boy let me kiss him?"

"No, ma; you kissed pa this morning, and he gave me a licking yesterday, and lips that touch licker shall never touch mine."

Wise to Their Habits.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said the book canvasser to the lady who had opened the door in answer to his ring, "but if you have a few moments to spare I'd like to show you this great work on the 'Habits of Savage Animals.'"

"No use wasting your time, young man," replied the female. "I've been married three times and know all about their habits."

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Finest Guaranteed 1909 Models $10 to $27
with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof tires.
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MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. D53 Chicago

Certain Symptoms.

"What's the trouble, Uncle Pete?" queried the tourist as he stopped in front of the little cabin.

"Deed, boss, Ah spec's Ah'm sufferin' wid bacteria," sighed the old man with the two yellow canes.

"Bacteria? What gave you that idea?"

"Why, ebeh since de doctor told me about bacteria Ah've had a misery in mah back ebeh since, sah."

A Scientist's Opinion.

Mr. Bilkins (looking up from the paper)—The eminent physician, Doctor Greathead, says there is no exercise so conducive to health in woman as ordinary housework.

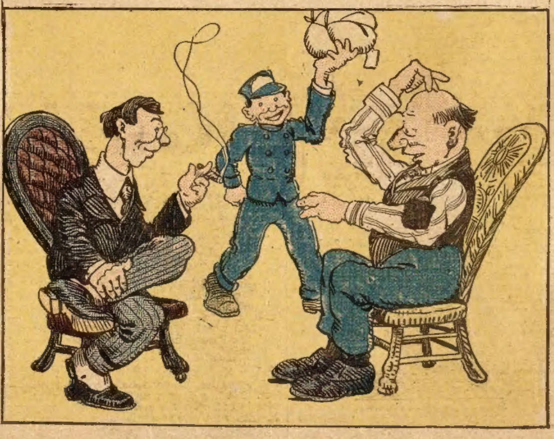
Mrs. Bilkins—Huh! I'll bet he's married.

Her Cooking.

"He says his wife made him what he is."

"I suppose you know that he is a dyspeptic?"—Houston Post.

"AT THE SMOKER."



Snigsworthy—I don't see how your collar ever gets soiled.
Giggleton—You don't? Why?
Snigsworthy—I would think the rubber in your neck would act as an eraser.

Material Payment Only.

Elizabeth's mother did not teach her little daughter much that she should have learned about religion, nor did the father.

The other day a guest said to the little girl: "Elizabeth, does your father say grace at the table?"

"What grace?" returned the girl innocently.

"Why, thanks for what you have to eat."

"Oh," replied Elizabeth, now enlightened. "We don't have to thank any one for what we have—we always pay cash."

FREE DEAFNESS CURE.
A remarkable offer by one of the leading ear specialists in this country, who will send two months' medicine free to prove his ability to cure Deafness, Head Noises and Catarrh. Address Dr. G. M. Branaman, 1283 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo.

The Difference.

Small Boy (looking up from his history)—Papa, the Union soldiers were paid only $13 a month. Seems to me that's awful small when a Congressman is paid $13 a day. Why ain't soldiers paid as much as Congressmen?

Papa—Soldiers, my son, do not fix their own salaries.

Green Room Gibes.

Leading Lady—That dear little Pittsburg millionaire named his auto after me.

Low Comedian—Good head. It reminds me of you every time I look at it.

Leading Lady—Because it is pretty?

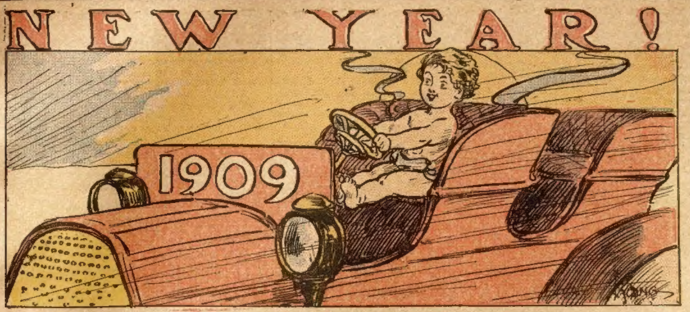
Low Comedian—No; because it is so well enameled and does a lot of puffing.

Somewhat Queer.

"It does seem queer," mused the man who seemed to be thinking aloud.

"What seems queer?" asked the innocent bystander, who had overheard the remark.

"That people who don't know right from wrong usually go wrong," answered the loud thinker.



In the Drug Store.

"Have you any postage stamps?" asked the lady, entering.

"No, madam," replied the polite attendant; "but we have something which tastes just as good."

In the Wrong Place.

"That man needs but one point to make him a perfect host."

"What is that?"

"If his wine were only as old as his jokes."

The Lawyer—Do you know the nature of an oath, madam?

The Witness—Well, I know the oaths of my husband are extremely ill-natured.

As Modified.

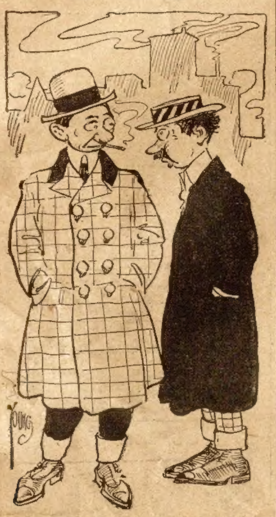
The usual crowd of loafers were seated around the stove in the village grocery.

"I never lied to my wife in my life——" began one of the bunch, when he was interrupted by a unanimous laugh that was loud and long.

"That I didn't get caught at it," ended the speaker, after the laugh had subsided.

Whereupon silence reigned supreme for nearly twenty-three seconds.

So Unfeeling.



Hinks—Yes, she's the limit! Why I told her: "If you refuse me I'll be desperate! I'll get a rope and hang myself to the tree in front of your house."

Dinks—Well, what did she have to say about that?

Hinks—She said: "Oh, please don't do it, dear. You know father doesn't want you hanging around here."

Moose and Vamoose.

It was up in the great north woods.

"Gracious, but I'm nervous," faltered the city hunter. "W-what is the best thing to do when you sight your first moose?"

"Well, pardner," laughed the guide, "if you are nervous the best thing to do is to vamoose."

Skating Proposal.

They were skating.

"Darling," he whispered, as they reached the end of the silvered lake, "what could be grander than the ring of steel?"

"Why, er—the ring of gold," said the pretty girl with a deep red blush and the next day the cards were out.

An Exception.

"How good it is to hear the call 'All's well!'" said the stranger in the small town.

"Not for me," responded the tall man in the big black coat.

"And why not for you?"

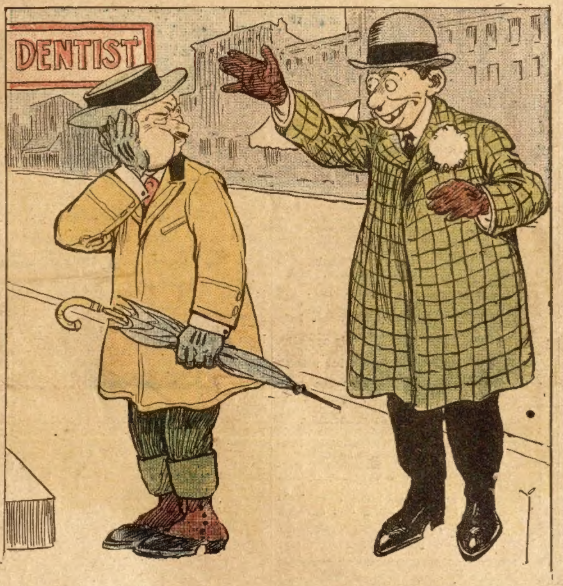
"Because I am the town's physician, stranger."

A Corrected Reading.

Mrs. Quiverful (sighing)—Seems to me poor folks like us always have large families.

Mr. Quiverful (who has just laid in a fresh supply of shoes for Johnny, Dickie, Willie, George, Jimmy and the rest)—You mean, my dear, people with large families are always poor.

EXCUSABLE.



De Cheer—Happy New Year!
De Growl (on the way to the dentist)—Do you mean to insult me?

JUST A FEW PRESENTS.

The "burning love" we read about
  To some may seem quite funny;
But the love we fear
With Xmas near
  Is the kind that burns our money.

A Contrary Man.

Mrs. Naggs—Did you see anything of my husband this morning?

Mrs. Homer—Yes.

Mrs. Naggs—Which way was he going?

Mrs. Homer—The other way.

Mrs. Naggs— I might have known it. He's the contrariest man that ever lived.

Matter of Duty.

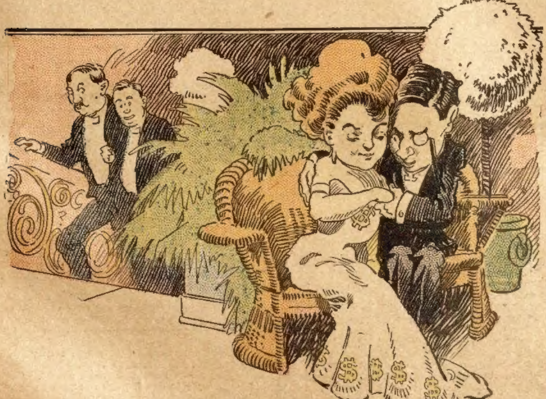
Shopper—What makes these goods so expensive?

Clerk—The duty, ma'am.

Shopper—Oh, then they are imported?

Clerk—No, they are domestic goods. But the proprietor thinks it his duty to increase his bank balance.

HIS ADMIRABLE QUALITY.



Mr. Nocoyne—Millie, I love you. I know I have no money, no good looks, nothing to attract a girl's admiration, but——
Miss Van Rox——Oh, yes, you have, Mr. Nocoyne. I'm sure I admire your nerve.

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Finest on earth. Write for special agents and dealers terms. DR. HAUX SPECTACLE CO., Box 115, St. Louis, Mo.

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EARN $8 ADVERTISING OUR WASHING FLUID in your town with 100 samples. SEND 2c. STAMPS and secure terr. A. W SCOTT, COHOES, N.Y.

$5 a Day Easily Made Selling GLASSES Agents wanted. Send for catalog Coulter Optical Co. Chicago

AGENTS PORTRAITS 35c, FRAMES 15c, sheet pictures 1c stereoscopes 25c, views 1c. 30 days credit. Samples & Catalog Free. Consolidated Portrait Co., 290—20 W. Adams St., Chicago.

$18 to $30 A WEEK SURE. Farmers "Ever-Ready" Tool Kit does it. 10 TOOLS IN ONE M. D. Finch made $27 in 9 hrs. Had no experience. You can do it too. FREE SAMPLES to workers. Foote Mfg. Co. Dept. 709, Dayton, Ohio

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Locally or traveling. Salary or commission. Experience unnecessary—we give full instructions. Address HOBOTOCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box R 13, DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

AGENTS Sell this Wonderful Noodle Cutter. Cuts noodles perfectly. Rose Moore sold 435 in a small town. Cleared $54.00. You can do as well. Write for Agents Free Outfit. ANCHOR MFG. CO. Dept. L, Dayton, Ohio

$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free, you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Write at once. ROYAL MANUFACTURING CO., Box 1016 Detroit, Mich.

MEN WANTED in every locality in the United States to advertise our goods, tack up showcards in all conspicuous places and distribute small advertising matter. Commission or salary $83 per month and expenses $4 per day. Steady work the year round; entirely new plan; no experience required. Write for particulars. ROYAL REMEDY CO., London, Ont., Canada.

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Agents wanted in every county to sell the popular Novelty Knives for Christmas Gifts with name, address, photo, lodge emblem, etc., on handle. AGENTS EARN $75 to $300 A MONTH (We show you how) Big profits—quick sales—exclusive territory. Write quick for our liberal money making special offer to agents. Our new self-sharpening scissors are the quickest sellers for lady agents. NOVELTY CUTLERY CO., 23 BAR STREET, CANTON, O.

"I MADE $12 PER DAY Selling This 7-Piece Kitchen Set" From sworn statement of H. S. CUNNINGHAM. AGENTS are coining money—selling from 50 to 500 sets per week. You can do it. Send your address today and let us PROVE IT. Experience unnecessary. We show you how to make $3 to $10 a day. OUTFIT FREE to workers. THOMAS MFG. CO. 428 Home Bldg., Dayton, Ohio

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Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agents' Directory List containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agents' Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Dirctory List as above stated. Write today. Address

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INDIANA, INDIANA COUNTY, PA

Horace Whitlock's Sister.

(Continued from page five.)

"What has the senorita to do with the treasure?" demanded Yetto with sudden suspicion.

"Nothing except that the two go together. General Carolus wants one, and his Secretary the other."

This cool announcement was sufficient to fire all the latent curiosity of the cunning, slow-witted halfbreed. Forgetting his former denial of the existence of the treasure, he asked somewhat eagerly:

"How did the money get here?"

"Why, if you don't know, I may as well tell you. It was brought down on the last steamer from the United States. It was brought here by your Secretary of State and shipped to this island for safe keeping. It was good American money, too, not your debased native trash worth about thirty cents on a dollar."

We had fallen in line during this conversation, and as we turned our footsteps up the hill, the soldiers stepped ahead and came within earshot. Yetto turned to order them back, and then, with sudden change of tactics, he dropped behind himself.

We entered the dark archway of the old monastery and threaded its numerous corridors to a rear room. This was our temporary place of residence, and the guards withdrew, stationing themselves outside of the door. It was little better than a prison, but Belmont's thoughts were too active to permit of gloom.

"Colonel Yetto is more susceptible to the influence of gold than Colonel Mauritus," he said with a smile when we were alone. "To that extent our condition has improved in the exchange of captors. I do not think the seeds of avarice are sown on barren ground this time."

Pacing the floor with active strides he continued after a pause: "He has the eye of an artist in crime, this Colonel Yetto, an eye that understands the nice points of the game. He'll not make the mistake of confusing the means with the end. Colonel Mauritus might have been too susceptible to the charms of the beautiful senorita. Not so Yetto, he's a criminal, and not a polite romance-weaver."

"You think he will return for more information?" I asked.

"He cannot avoid it. It's his nature. He has the real love for wealth. What is this revolution to a treasure like Farnley's money?"

"And you mean to use this as a bait to lure Colonel Yetto from his loyalty to his country?"

"I'm trying to use the treasure as all wealth should be used—to make it do the greatest amount of good with the least amount of harm. Yetto is our tool. He has no sentiment in him. He will sell his soul to get possession of this fortune, and thereby is our chance to save our lives and render the Senorita Whitlock a valuable service."

"So you are preparing to exchange the money for Miss Whitlock's release?" I said quietly.

"That is my first move in the game. But, of course, I may eventually do both—release the senorita and help you recover the money."

CHAPTER IX.

We were prisoners in the strictest sense of the word. An investigation of our quarters showed us closed and locked doors on all sides. A small court-yard opened in the rear, but four high walls made escape impossible in that direction. As if to make security doubly certain, a sentry perched on a nearby balcony looked curiously down upon us.

Our prison seemed to be located near the middle of the gloomy white building in a sort of basement with no other outlet except the dark, damp corridors which we had threaded on entering. It was chilly in the room, even in the middle of the day, and the smell of musty odors did not add to the pleasantness of the place.

"This seems to be the trap Farnley expected us to walk into," I remarked. "He's succeeded admirably."

"Yes, we're here, but we're nearer our quest, senor. That should be consoling."

"But if we're prisoners that won't help matters much."

"No, but you forget that Yetto is our ally. He'll return soon to treat with us. That treasure is weighing heavily on his mind."

I shook my head in doubt.

"You forget that he has an easier victim."

Belmont held his cigarette suspended between his fingers.

"You mean——" he began unsteadily.

"That it will be easier to force the whole story from the lips of Miss Whitlock," I replied in answer to the unfinished question.

There was a nervous twitch of the consul's lips. He dropped his cigarette, and admitted slowly:

"I never thought of that possibility. Yetto's equal to it—he's cunning and shrewd, and a scoundrel."

We were left to unpleasant reflections. Belmont nervously paced the floor, and I turned to examine the walls and ceiling of our small, musty room.

"I wish Yetto would come," he remarked once.

His face was pale, and his cool, undaunted suavity seemed to desert him.

"No, we don't want Yetto yet," I answered. "We want time to examine our prison."

"There's nothing to examine—nothing but four walls and a court-yard. But if Yetto doesn't come by evening we'll pick off that sentry and make our escape over the walls."

"We'll run no such risk at present," I answered quietly. "This is an old building, and if I mistake not it has been used as a prison for many years. Its floors and walls seem solid, but who knows?"

I had been carefully studying the joints of the stones, and had been led to suspect secret passages. In the days when the building had been used as a monastery there may have been need for more than one exit from the room. The floor was paved with irregular stone slabs, some of which were loose and gave forth hollow sounds when struck. One stone in a corner, in particular, attracted my attention. It had dropped a fraction of an inch below the level, and when struck, a hollow reverberation followed.

"If you will listen at the door," I said finally, "I'll make an investigation here."

"What do you expect to find?" Belmont asked in surprise.

"I don't know. But it's my nature to be inquisitive, and slight details sometimes prove important clews."

I inserted my finger tips under the edge of the stone and tried to raise it, but it was too heavy or too firmly wedged in position. Belmont, forgetful of his duty, turned to help me. But our combined efforts proved futile.

"Oh what use is all this waste of energy, senor?" he grunted in disgust. "Do you expect to dig your way out of this prison? These thick-skinned revolutionists don't build secret passages under their buildings. They haven't the ingenuity to work out such a problem."

"Nevertheless," I responded confidently, I'm going to have a look under this stone. Once upon a time it was removed for a purpose, but lately——"

"I don't agree with you, senor," drawled Belmont.

I tugged away in silence, using my fingers to pick off some of the crumbling mortar. Then suddenly I felt the stone move. Belmont whistled softly and stooped down to assist me.

Slowly but surely the stone moved upward, and then to our astonished gaze a dark hole was revealed. Belmont hastily struck a match, and exclaimed:

"Stairs, by Jupiter! What sort of game is this we're up against? Has Carolus honeycombed the building with secret passages?"

"No, it was built ages ago, and has not been used for years."

We twisted some papers together and made a torch of them. By the aid of this light we examined the flight of stairs, the stones reeking with slime and dampness. Belmont withdrew his hands in disgust from the moist stones.

"Makes you think of snakes and crawling vermin," he muttered. "Are you going to descend, senor?"

I nodded affirmatively. But when I stepped down Belmont held back reluctantly. I had reached the bottom of the steps before he followed. At the foot of the flight of steps a narrow corridor began and disappeared in the darkness beyond. The air was cold and moist, and the walls reeked with dampness.

Step by step we advanced along this corridor, my companion shivering either from the chill of the place or from the grewsomeness of the situation. Suddenly the corridor opened into a square room. Our feeble light dimply outlined the stones of the four sides. In one corner was a pile of leaves and straw and a shred of what had been an old blanket.

"Come, let us get out of this," whispered Belmont with a shiver. "Look there! Some poor devil has been imprisoned to starve to death. I don't fancy keeping company with the dead in this grewsome hole. I never did like wakes."

He pointed with a shaking finger at the outlines of a figure half covered with the blanket and straw. Something in the attitude of the man made me hesitate. I raised a hand in protest. The figure was moving.

In another moment the head was raised on the arms, and a pair of startlingly brilliant eyes stared at us. It took all of our self-control to return the gaze without retreating. Like a caged animal, the man held us by the magnetic force of those terrible eyes, and we stood hypnotized. The light played feebly about the room, and formed fantastic shadows on the walls.

To break the fearful spell which had seized us, I asked in a hoarse whisper:

"Who are you? And what are you doing here?"

The prostrate form came to a sitting position with sudden energy, and a voice asked:

"Who—who are you? Are you Americans?"

Then in a sudden burst of frenzy, the man leaped to his feet and rushed toward us. We recoiled a step, but he stared us eagerly, hungrily in the face. Then seizing Belmont's hands he added:

"You are the American Consul at Porto Blanco! Thank God, you've come to my rescue! Take me from this infernal hell! Another day of it and I'd be crazy!"

"Senor Whitlock!" stammered Belmont in surprise.

"Where is my sister?" the imprisoned man continued. "Is she safe, too? Poor Flo! What a place I brought her to!

"You'll take me out of this," he pleaded with piteous appeal in his voice, as we showed an indication to retreat. "You'll not leave me here another minute?"

"We're prisoners, too," Belmont replied briefly. "But we have light in our prison. Come with us. I'm sick of this burrow."

"Prisoners, too?" stammered the man. "Then—then—God help poor Flo!"

We half-supported the trembling figure through the narrow corridor and up the short flight of stairs. Belmont closed the stone over the dark hole and muttered:

"I hope I'll never get inside of there again. If I had dynamite I'd blow the whole thing sky-high."

The continuation of this thrilling story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription, for many great stories that you cannot afford to miss will appear during the coming months.

The Great Unknown.

Unhesitatingly the tall man with the scattered bush of hair upon his chin and face stepped up to the office of the Metropolitan Hotel and placed his name upon the register. Then drawing up in a pose of profound importance he said to the clerk:

"I suppose you know me?"

"Can't say I do."

"Take a look at the name."

The clerk glanced at the signature on the register and shook his head.

"I'm afraid I don't recollect."

"Come a little closer, so you can see me better."

"Nope. Don't seem to have made your acquaintance," went on the clerk.

"But you recognize the name?"

"Sorry, but I've never heard it before."

"Look at my face again."

"It's no use. I cannot——"

"Are you certain?" interrupted the tall man.

"Absolutely."

"Did you ever hear of William Brennings Jyan, the candidate for the Presidency?"

"O, yes!"

"And of John W. Hern?"

"I think not."

"What's that? Never heard of John W. Hern?"

"Are you the man?"

"I am."

"What is your business, Mr. Hern?"

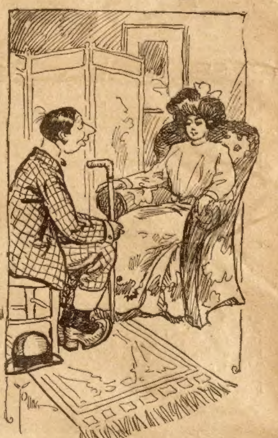
"Why, I'm the candidate for the Vice-Presidency."

With a muttered apology the clerk assigned his guest to the bridal chamber.—Judge.

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (z)

The "Less" Age.



Cholly—It's wonderful, bah Jove! Riding without hawses, telegraphing without wires, and all these things.

Maudie—Yes, and thinking without brains.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream eand Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

An All-Round Book.

The book agent had spent a discouraging morning, and when he had an opportunity to scan the face of Eli Hobbs at close range, he felt that there was small chance of making a sale. However, he had more than one method of suggestion.

"Sitting out here on the piazza afternoons with your wife, this would be the very book to read aloud," he said, ingratiatingly, to Mr. Hobbs, taking the other rocking chair and opening the large red-covered volume.

"I don't read and I haven't any wife," replied Mr. Hobbs, dryly.

"Dear me!" said the book agent. "Well, if your wife is dead, perhaps there are children. Now, children find this book——"

"There are no children," interrupted Mr. Hobbs. "There's nobody but myself and my cat."

"Well," said the book agent, "don't you ever want a good heavy book to throw at her, just to ease your feelings?"

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I Treat Before It poisons deep glands. NO KNIFE OR PAIN. No Pay Until Cured. No X Ray or other Swindle. A Pacific Island plant makes the cures. Absolute Guarantee. Any tumor, lump or sore on the lip, face or anywhere six months is cancer. 130-Page Book sent free with testimonials of thousands cured, at their homes.

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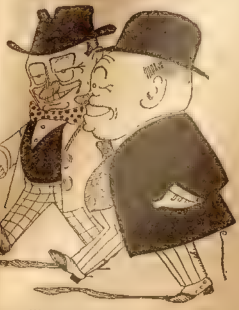
PICKLED PEPPERS

PRISCILLA AT HER KNITTING.

John Alden pinched Priscilla's chin,
Tho' this was nothing shocking;
Priscilla dropped five stitches in
Her good old homespun stocking.

And how the pious folk did stare,
And oh, the verbal knocking,
To see prudish Priscilla wear—
A pair of drop-stitch stockings.

Strenuous Activity.



Howe—The room was torn up as if some terrible struggle had taken place there.

Wise—Well, that doesn't necessarily imply deadly combat. Maybe some man was merely trying to get into his last year's flannel underwear.

Found at Last.

Housekeeper (to pleasant-faced girl at employment agency)—Have you any objection to the country?

Girl (politely)—None at all, madam.

Housekeeper—I have quite a large family.

Girl—The more the merrier.

Housekeeper—Seven children, two of them quite young.

Girl—I love little children.

Housekeeper—It will be necessary for you to bake bread, wash, and get the meals. I attend to the pastry and chamber-work myself.

Girl—I will also make the pastry and do the rest, if you will allow me.

Housekeeper—I cannot give you more than three afternoons off.

Girl—Two will be sufficient, perhaps more than I will want, as my plan is to give strict attention to my household duties, and thus get the work done up promptly every day, so as to have plenty of opportunities to rest between times.

Housekeeper—I am delighted——

Stranger (suddenly entering)—Sorry to interrupt you, madam, but you are conversing with one of my patients, who has just escaped from the Hopelessly Incurable Lunatic Asylum.

Planted Birds.

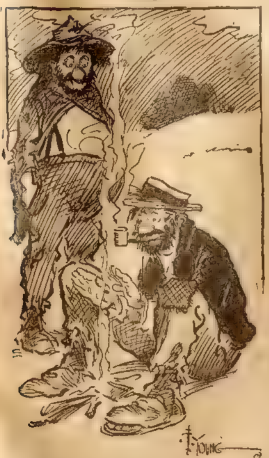
Out in California small Tommy beheld his first ostrich farm. The word "farm" puzzled him for a while until he chanced to see some of the huge birds with their heads deep in the sand.

"Oh, auntie!" he exclaimed, suddenly. "Now I know why they call them ostrich farms."

"Why, Tommy?" asked his aunt.

"Because they plant them in the ground. There's a lot of planted birds now."

A Snap.



"I would be willing to work if I could get the sort of job I want."

"What would that be?"

"Well, I wouldn't mind calling out the stations on an Atlantic liner."

Angel Without Wings.

"So you have come in answer to my advertisement for an office boy?" said the old broker briskly. "Do you smoke cigarettes?"

"No, sir," replied the saintly youngster in the doorway.

"Read novels?"

"Never, sir."

"Play guggler with the paper weights or talk nonsense through the telephone when your employer is absent?"

"No, sir."

"Ever go to the circus?"

"Never saw a circus in my life, sir."

"How about baseball? Do you take two or three afternoons a week to see the game?"

"Don't like baseball, sir."

The old broker bit the end off his cigar.

"My boy," he said, quietly, "this is the twenty-ninth story, isn't it?"

"I think so, sir"

"Well, it is not high enough for you."

"Not high enough for me, sir?"

"No, you belong up in paradise."

Teaching the Judge.

An ancedote is told of Chief Justice John Marshall. Returning one afternoon from his farm near Richmond, Va., to his home in that city, the hub of his wheel caught on a small sapling growing by the roadside. After striving unsuccessfully for some moments to extricate the wheel, he heard the sound of an ax in the woods and saw a negro man approaching. Hailing him, he said:

"If you will get that ax and cut down this tree, I'll give you a dollar."

"I c'n git yer by 'thout no ax, ef dat's all yer want."

"Yes, that's all," said the judge.

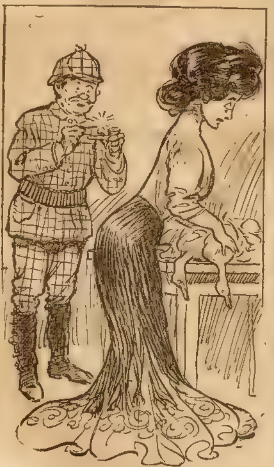
The man simply backed the horse until the wheel was clear of the sapling, and then brought the vehicle safely around it.

"You don't charge a dollar for that, do you?" asked the astonished chief justice.

"No, massa; but it's wuf a dollar to larn some folks sense."

The darky got his dollar without further questioning.

Truthful John.



"Now, John, I thought you said you had been duck shooting."

"Yes, dear—been duck shooting."

"But these you've brought home are tame ducks."

"Yes, I tamed 'em after I shot 'em."

The New Housekeeper.

She was newly married and did not know a little bit about either housekeeping or shopping. It was a crusher; but Gus, the grocer, was an experienced man and clever, so he kept writing and did not smile.

"I want ten pounds of paralyzed sugar," she began with a businesslike air.

"Yes'm. Anything else?"

"Two tins of condemned milk."

"Yes'm."

He set down pulverized sugar and condensed milk.

"Anything more, ma'am?"

"A bag of fresh salt. Be sure it's fresh."

"Yes'm. What next?"

"A pound of desecrated codfish."

He glibly wrote "dessicated cod."

"Nothing more, ma'am?"

"No."

"We have some nice horseradish, just in."

"It would be of no use to us," she said; "we do not keep a horse."

How He Registered.

A traveling salesman, finding himself in a strange territory, sought the only tavern in the small settlement to put up for the night. Much to his surprise and chagrin, the proprietor demanded $5.

"What?" ejaculated the salesman. "Why, that is robbery. I can stop at the largest hotels in Chicago for that sum."

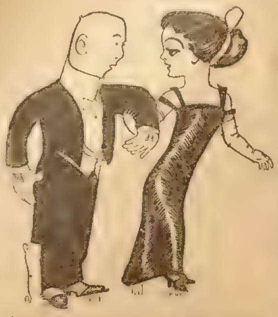
"But yeou ain't in Shee-cago now, stranger," drawled the proprietor, "and besides, we have some of the biggest people in this State as our guests. Take Isaac M. Bung, the great lumber man. He was here yesterday and there is his name on the register—I. M. Bung."

The salesman looked from the register to the coming darkness. Then he took the pen and wrote beneath the name:

"I. M. Stung."

And forking over the $5 in advance he ascended the creaking stairway to his room.

A Compromise.



Oliver—Won't you give me just one waltz?

Marion—Well-er-really, I don't think I ought to.

Oliver—Please do.

Marion—Very well, then, but let it be very slow, please; I'm in mourning, you know.

Two Weepers.

Ray Brown, art director of Everybody's, gave a story by Samuel Hopkins Adams to May Wilson Preston for illustration. Mrs. Preston made the pictures, which were fine, and sent them with the bill. On sending them she telephoned to Mr. Brown, saying:

"That's a fine story of Adams'. It made me weep!"

A few days later Mr. Adams visited Everybody's office.

"That story of yours must be a good one, Sam," said Brown. "It made two people weep."

"Indeed!" said Adams, much pleased. "Who were they?"

"May Wilson Preston, when she read the manuscript," replied Brown, "and me—when I got her bill for making the illustrations."

Her Leap-Year Privilege.

He had been courting a girl for a long time. It happened on Sunday night after church. They were sitting on the sofa, and she looked with ineffable tenderness into his noble blue eyes.

"Tom," she murmured, with a tremor in her voice, "didn't you tell me once you would be willing to do any act of heroism for my sake?"

"Yes, Mary, and I gladly reiterate that statement now," he replied in confident tones.

"Well, Tom, I want you to do something really heroic for me!"

"Speak, darling! What is it?"

"Ask me to be your wife. We've been fooling long enough."

A Childish Questioner.

A man had just arrived at a Massachusetts summer resort. In the afternoon he was sitting on the veranda when a handsome young woman and her six-year-old son came out. The little fellow at once made friends with the latest arrival.

"What is your name?" he asked. Then, when this information had been given, he added. "Are you married?"

"I am not married," responded the man with a smile.

At this the child paused a moment, and, turning to his mother, said:

"What else was it, mamma, you wanted me to ask him?"

Halcyon Days.

"Pa, what are the halcyon days?"

"They are the ones a fellow looks back to with pleasure because he has forgotten what tough luck he was having at the time."

Knew too Much.

"Bring me a blue pencil," said the boss.

"There isn't a blue pencil in the office," answered the smart clerk, "but I can make any ordinary pencil write blue."

"How?" queried the boss

"By writing it b-l-u-e," answered the smart clerk.

And the boss informed him that he could look for another job, as he couldn't afford to pay the wages his excessive knowledge demanded.

THE REASON WHY.

He loves to rise at early dawn,
When others love to lie.
This is the finest time for him,
Because he is a fly.

"Come Myrtle," said Percival Black,
"For a ride in my new Faddillac."
But the auto turned turtle
And Percy and Myrtle
Were carted away in a sack.

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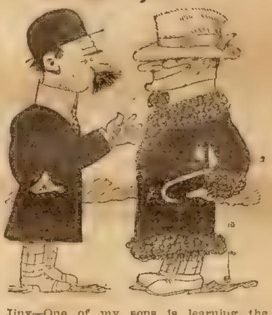
The Object.



Jinx—One of my sons is learning the cornet, and the other the fiddle; one daughter studying the piano and one plays the flute, and my wife has started taking singing lessons.

Binx—My gracious! is your family as musical as that?

Jinx—No, but there's a vacant lot next to our place and we don't want anybody to build on it.

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successfully treated, whether in the first, second or third stage. If you have ulcers, mucous patches in the mouth, sore throat, eruptions, copper colored spots on the body, falling hair, swollen glands, pains in the bones, and severe continued headaches, you need our special treatment. The physician and president of this Company has made a specialty of treating Specific Blood Diseases for the past fifteen years. Treated over [illegible] cases. You cannot afford to experiment in treating this disease. Place your case at once in the care of the physician of this company. Booklet on Blood Poison, testimonials and full information about your case Free. Write.
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WE HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE THIS OFFER AGAIN AND WILL GIVE YOU REGULAR PAY FOR THE WORK YOU DO WHICH CAN BE DONE IN A FEW MINUTES. THE WORK WON'T TAKE YOU FROM YOUR BUSINESS. WE MAKE THIS OFFER BECAUSE WE WANT A PERSON RIGHT ON THE FIELD. THERE IS NO SOLICITING OR CANVASSING. IF YOU CARE TO LOOK INTO THIS OFFER FURTHER WRITE
THE CORRESPONDENT MANAGER, SATURDAY BLADE AND CHICAGO LEDGER, 76 DEARBORN AVE., CHICAGO.

YOUR HEART

Does it Flutter, Palpitate or Skip Beats? Have you Shortness of Breath, Tenderness, Numbness or Pain in left side, Dizziness, Fainting Spells, Spots before the eyes, Sudden Starting in sleep, Nightmare, Hungry or Weak Spells, Oppressed Feeling in chest, Choking Sensation in throat, Painful to lie on left side, Cold Hands or Feet, Difficult Breathing, Dropsy, Swelling of the feet or ankles, or Neuralgia around the heart? If you have one or more of the above symptoms of heart disease, don't fail to use Dr. Kinsman's Celebrated Heart Tablets, the remedy which has made so many marvelous cures. Not a secret or "patent" medicine. One out of four has a weak or diseased heart. Three-fourths of these do not know it, and thousands die who have been wrongfully treated for the Stomach, Lungs, Kidneys or Nerves. Don't drop dead like hundreds of others when Dr. Kinsman's Heart Tablets will cure you.

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BOY'S
AND
GIRL'S
CORNER

Lost in the Desert;

Or, THE PERILS OF THE PLAINS

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER I.

A SHADOW OF MOONLIGHT.

NIGHT on the wide expanse of plain that lay silent and houseless in its lonely desolation; night on the ghostly buttes that rose like islands out of a waveless sea—night, with moonlight white and radiant everywhere, save in the deep ravines where the prowling coyote slipped noiselessly in search of its prey.

Paul Sanford, a youth of 17, reined in his horse at the summit of a little knoll and looked about him. To the south the gray waste of plain fell away in sinuous ripples, scarred here and there by low ravines that were etched in black against the shimmering gray. To the north, the east and the west, the plains stretched away toward the purple horizon, a level waste of unbroken desolation.

"I think I must have missed my way," thought Paul, as he turned his horse's head to the north. "But I shall trust to luck to find the way, and if I fail I can take my back trail."

A short distance ahead were several mounds or buttes, standing like ghostly sentinels above the plain, and toward these Paul rode at a sweeping gallop.

Crossing a shallow ravine, he spurred his horse to the summit of the nearest mound, and from the elevation he again scanned the country lying to the north. But no sign of life or human habitation met his gaze.

It seemed little use to continue his journey. Each mile he traveled might carry him further from his destination. Better to wait for daylight before proceeding further.

He descended the slope to a little basin, and dismounting, he unsaddled and picketed his horse. Strapped to his saddle was a large knapsack, and taking out some hardtack, dried buffalo meat and a piece of cheese, he seated himself on his saddle and began eating, washing down the frugal fare with water from one of the canteens.

He had ridden many miles since leaving the Santa Fe trail far to the south. He had left Council Grove some days before in company with one of Kitchen's trains which was westward bound, on his way to Duck Creek, a small stream lying many miles north of the old trail.

Paul Sanford's mission to that wild region was a strange one. He was an orphan and had but one living relative—if he were living—Daniel Filter, an uncle, an eccentric man of 50 whose roving disposition had carried him into many lands.

Daniel Filter had been a sailor in his younger days, and later had kept a small store in a New England town. But during the days of the gold fever, when the world was pouring multitudes into the gold fields of California, Filter sold his store, and placing Paul Sanford—who was making his home with Filter—in school, set out for the West.

Daniel Filter left Paul well provided for. Having taken the boy at the death of Paul's parents, he treated him in every way as if he were his own son.

For nearly a year Paul heard nothing from his uncle. Then a letter came. Filter had made his fortune in the gold fields and would start for home within a week. It was three months before Paul had any further news of his uncle. One evening a man giving his name as Jacob Finley came to the boarding school and asked to see Paul Sanford. The stranger who had just returned from the gold fields had a strange story to tell. He knew Daniel Filter, and had worked beside him in the placer mines in California. The two had become friends, and both had made comfortable fortunes. When they left the mines it was with the intention to go to New Mexico and engage in sheep raising, having abandoned their original intention to return to the East. But on their arrival at Santa Fe, after taking a look at the country, they were not pleased with the outlook there and decided to return to the East. They bought a wagon and team and a supply of provisions and fell in with a train bound for Independence, which was then the outfitting place for all trains going westward over the Santa Fe trail.

"We had a pleasant and uneventful journey till we reached the Arkansas valley in western Kansas," said Jacob Finley, "and we might have gotten through without trouble had not one of our mules gone lame. This threw us behind the train, and one evening, near sunset, we were surprised by a band of hostile Comanches which suddenly emerged from a clump of plum bushes near the river and began an attack. We were cut off from the train, and it looked pretty much as if we would be wiped out. But we got into a ravine, and from behind the bank we gave the reds more than they had bargained for. We drove them back, but they didn't leave. They fell back over in a grove of cottonwoods near the river and waited. It was plain that, after they had remained keeping watch on us for several hours that they had not abandoned the attack, but would besiege us till we should be brought into submission from the want of water, for they had us cut off from the river, our only source of supply.

"We remained in our position all night and the next day. We had to keep watch constantly so as to provide against a surprise, and it didn't take us long to figure out how it would end if no help arrived.

"As night came down again and the Indians still maintained their position, keeping constant watch on us, we began to realize that something must be done. I have knocked about the West for a number of years and in doing so I have learned a good many things. It was plain to be seen that the reds were putting all their attention to keeping us away from the river. This gave me a thought. Why couldn't we give them the slip? I spoke to Filter about it and we decided to make the undertaking. It was quite dark and there was no moon, and everything seemed to conspire to help us. As luck would have it, we were in a ravine which concealed us from the savages. We waited till about twelve that night and then we carefully packed our outfit, blankets provisions and other articles in the wagon on the two mules. When this was done we made sure that the redskins were not watching our movements; then leading the mules up the ravine, keeping in the dry sandy bed of the dried up stream, we worked our way cautiously and silently toward the north. It was quite impossible to take our wagon, for to have done so would have drawn the attention of the Indians to us at once. We followed the ravine for a quarter of a mile, and then feeling that we were at a safe distance from the redskins, we mounted the horses and proceeded at a more rapid pace.

"It was our purpose to travel northward for a mile, then take an easterly course, bearing southward, and strike the trail. We stopped now and then to listen for sounds of pursuit, but we heard none. It was plain that we had given the Comanches the slip.

"We traveled for hours, and yet we did not come to the trail. The sky was obscured by clouds and we had no mark to guide us. We had traveled many miles, and by our reckoning should have reached the trail long before this, but there were no signs of it. We now became alarmed as we realized that we were lost. We might be traveling in the opposite direction to that which we had supposed. While we were considering what was best to do, a small red point of light gleamed through the darkness. Leaving Filter in charge of the horses, I approached the light cautiously. I was not sure that the light did not come from the camp of the foe. Indeed, I should not have been greatly surprised to find that we had traveled in a circle and returned to the starting point. So I made my way very carefully down the slope toward the light. As I drew near I discovered that the light issued from a dugout in the side of a hill close to the bank of a small stream. A few cottonwoods grew along the margin of the creek, and under these dense thickets of underbrush. Pausing within a dozen yards of the dugout, I could get a good view of the interior, for the door was open to admit the cooling breeze from the south.

"The rude dwelling contained a single occupant, an old man of perhaps sixty. He was sitting near the door, his elbows on his knees, his chin resting in his hands. I approached, calling to him in friendly greeting as I advanced.

"He put his hand on a rifle at his side at the sound of my voice, but as I came within the circle of the light he came out and bade me enter. I explained to him the predicament of myself and friend, telling of our adventures with the Indians and escape. He told me to bring my friend and make ourselves at home. When I got back with Filter the old man had us a cup of coffee made and some cold buffalo which he set before us. It was a godsend that we happened to come upon his place of abode. We were, he informed us, some fifteen miles from the Santa Fe trail, and might never have found our way back to it.

"We decided to remain there for the night, for we didn't wish to take any chances by making an attempt to find the trail that night. We were quite worn out, and were glad enough to have a chance to get a little rest, for we had not slept for forty-eight hours.

"Before retiring for the night, we were careful to bring the bags of gold we had brought all the way from California with us and place them beneath the blankets on which we lay. We soon fell into a dreamless sleep, and when we awoke the morning sun was shining brightly into the open door of the dugout. Filter was already up, and as I turned to greet him I saw that something was wrong. The bags of gold—the fortune for which he had toiled in the gold fields of California—had vanished!"

CHAPTER II.

"Yes," went on Jacob Finley, "Daniel Filter's six bags of gold were gone—vanished as if they had melted into the air. We were stupefied at the loss. Rufus Hale—for such was our guest's name—was just getting out of his bunk, and his amazement over the loss was not less than ours. While the circumstances of the disappearance of the gold might have caused suspicion to point to Hale, it was impossible for Filter or me to believe him guilty. We searched the cabin thoroughly, and explored every nook and corner for traces of the missing gold, but all to no purpose. Filter was fearfully cast down, and declared his intention to remain there till he should find his gold or be convinced that it could never be found. That some one had entered the dugout while we slept and carried off the bags seemed to me to be the only solution to the mystery. Hale was overwhelmed with regret at the loss, and insisted on Filter remaining till the mystery could be cleared up. I remained there for three days, and with much regret, finally started for the trail alone. I struck a train and came through without any accident. Before leaving, however, I promised Filter to call on his nephew on my return to the East and acquaint him with all that had happened. And so I have fulfilled my promise."

This is the story that Jacob Finley told to Paul Sanford, and so greatly was the youth affected by it that he resolved to go to his uncle at once, and if necessary, return to the gold fields with him and help him to regain his lost fortune. And it was this resolve that had brought him to the far away Western plans.

As Paul ate the lunch from his haversack, he reflected over his situation. He had already traveled many miles, and as near as he could guess, he must be in the vicinity of Duck Creek. If not, then he had not followed the right direction. He would wait till daylight and then continue his journey.

Although the day had been intensely warm, the coming of night had brought a refreshing coolness peculiar to the plains, and having finished his lunch, Paul was about to stretch himself on his blanket when he caught sight of something moving along the edge of a ravine some distance away.

At first he thought it was a wolf, but a second glance told him that it was a human form. It moved slowly and then suddenly vanished in a clump of sage brush. For some time Paul watched for it to reappear, but in vain.

It might be an Indian! The thought filled Paul with sudden fear. It was not unlikely that some roving band of Comanches might be near, and realizing this, Paul remained silent and watchful.

At the time of which we write—a half century ago—the plains of western Kansas were infested with bands of hostile Comanches whose fearful deeds of pillage and slaughter had made them the terror of the whites along the border.

Paul had listened to many of the stories of Indian depredations, and these were of a character to inspire him with dread. It was no wonder, then, that he experienced a thrill of fear as he realized that he might at that moment be very near a band of hostile Comanches.

He lay flat among the sage brush, keeping keenly on the alert. He listened intently while he kept his eyes riveted on the ravine where he had seen the dark form moving.

As he lay thus a faint sound reached his ears—something that sounded like a cry of distress; but it was so faint that it barely rose above the soughing of the night breeze through the sage. The cry was pitiful and went to his heart. That it was some human being in distress, he had little doubt, yet he realized that he must act with the greatest caution. From what he had heard of the character of the Indian he knew that he sometimes practiced the most cunning tricks to lure the whites into ambush. It might be an Indian, he thought, but he was resolved to find out.

Keeping his body flat on the ground as was possible under the circumstances, he began to crawl down the slope in the direction of the ravine. But he did not continue in a direct course, but turning to the left he pursued a circuitous route, approaching the spot where the dark form had been seen from another direction.

Like all persons who braved the perils of the frontier, Paul Sanford was well pro-

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vided with arms. He carried an Enfield rifle, a Colt's revolver, and a short, thick knife. Such an equipment was not only necessary for self protection, but was essential to every plainsman for procuring game, an abundance of which could then be found on the great prairies of the West.

Paul held himself in readiness to defend himself in case he should be attacked by any foe, and he was constantly on the alert to provide against being taken by surprise.

Having made a circuit of some three hundred yards, he now began to approach the ravine from the east. As he descended the gentle slope he found that the sage brush grew more thickly there and more luxuriant, so that his person was completely concealed from any chance observer.

A low moan now came to him, and he caught a fleeting glimpse of something not twenty yards ahead. It rose suddenly and stood clearly revealed in the bright rays of the moon. Paul stared at the figure in utter amazement. He rubbed his hands across his eyes as if to clear his vision, and then looked again.

Yes, there could be no doubt about it; it was a girl, not over fifteen, standing in the full light of the moon, a troubled face turned to the south as if she were looking longingly for something which she could not see. Her presence there alone mystified Paul, and for a moment he regarded her in in silence. He realized that his sudden appearance would startle her, and while he was debating with himself as to the best method of making his presence known without causing her a severe fright, a voice came from a clump of sage brush to the left of the girl.

"Doan stand der like dat, honey, dear, when dem murdahin' Injuns may be sneakin' round!"

"I don't think you need have any fear of Indians," said Paul in a reassuring tone, rising and standing in full view. "I shall be glad to offer you my protection."

At the sound of his voice the girl gave a violent start, and turning her gaze in his direction, the sudden look of terror gave place to one of joy.

"Oh, I am so glad you are not an Indian!" she cried.

"I am sure the pleasure is mutual," smiled Paul, removing his hat and advancing. "I hardly think I should enjoy being an Indian. I much prefer being who I am—Paul Sanford, of Massachusetts."

"I am glad, indeed, to meet you, Mr. Sanford," said the girl, extending her hand in frank greeting. "We have been frightened to death almost for fear we should encounter a band of Indians."

"Dat we has," said another voice, and a negro woman rose suddenly from a clump of sage brush. "But now, bless de Lord, we hab some one to protect us," she added with deep satisfaction.

"Are you two alone?" asked Paul.

"All alone," replied the girl, "and lost in this dreadful country, but we thank Heaven we are still alive. Oh, Mr. Sanford," she added, "we have passed through a terrible experience. I wonder now how I have ever lived through it."

She shuddered as she spoke and her voice shook.

"Have you been separated from your friends?" asked Paul.

"The Comanches made an attack on the train," said the girl, "and Aunt Fanny and I escaped by what seems a miracle. The others," she added with a sob, "must have perished at the hands of the Indians."

CHAPTER III.

The girl covered her face with her hands as if to shut out the sight of the terrible experience.

Paul was moved deeply with pity. These fearful tragedies of the plains had made many a hearth desolate and had spread sorrow and anguish throughout the border. Perhaps the girl had lost her parents, Paul thought, and in her deep distress had been left alone and friendless in the desert.

"Were your parents with the train?" asked Paul.

"No, sir, I am thankful they did not have to go through that awful experience. They are dead," she added sadly. "I was on my way west in company with an uncle and aunt, my only living relatives. I fear they fell victims to the Indians with the rest."

"That is sad indeed," said Paul, with sympathy. "But it may not be so bad as you think. Let us hope that they escaped."

"We can only hope," replied the girl, "but alas! it is hard to believe that those terrible wretches allowed any one to escape if they could help it."

"When was the attack made?" Paul asked.

"More than twenty-four hours ago. It was just at nightfall."

"And you have been all this time without food or water?" cried Paul.

"We found a little water in a pool but it was so salt that it burned our lips."

"Then you must come with me at once," said Paul. "I am glad to say that I have both water and food with me."

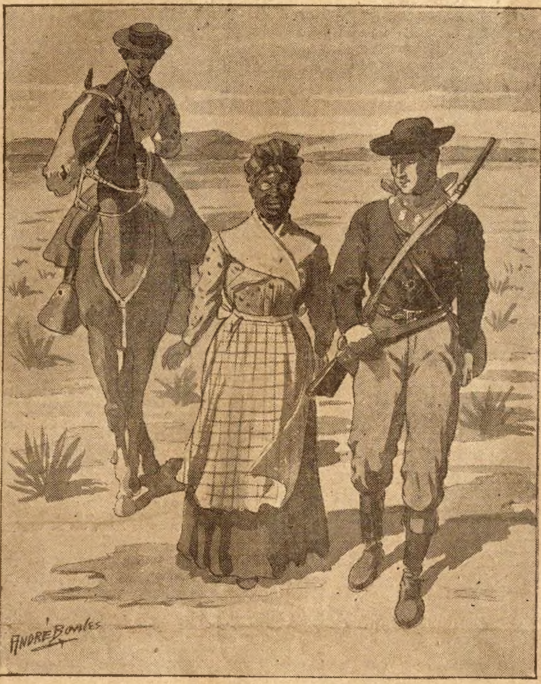
"Bless de Lord!" cried Aunt Fanny. "My throat is so dry dat I can hardly speak."

Paul led the way to the spot where he had left his horse, and when the girl and the negress had been served with water and food, the three sat down on a little knoll to talk over their situation.

The girl's story was a chronicle of one of those pitiful tragedies of the plains—a catalogue of Indian ferocity and inhuman cruelty.

Her name was Dora Hatfield. She was an orphan, and since the death of her parents she had made her home with her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson, in Kansas City. They had no children of their own, and were Dora's only living relatives. Some two weeks before they had joined a train at Independence and had set out for Colorado, taking Dora with them. Two days out from Council Grove news of Indian depredations along the Santa Fe trail came to them, and a little further on they came upon the charred remains of a large wagon train, every soul having been killed or carried away as captives, the wagons burned after being plundered and the cattle driven away.

The awful sight chilled the blood of the emigrants, and some were for turning back, but as it was decided that as much danger lay behind as ahead, they finally decided to push on. Two days later the train was attacked by a band of hostile Comanches just at nightfall. When the attack was made the faithful negress who had been a servant in the Dawson household for many years, and who had nursed Dora when she was an infant, seized the girl and ran into a dense plum thicket near the Arkansas River. With the frightful yells of the Indians ringing in their ears, they crawled deeper and deeper into the thicket, and when they were at a safe distance away, they ran on and on, while from behind the light of the burning wagons threw an awful beacon in their wake. Appalled and terror-stricken, they hurried breathlessly on, not daring to stop. They soon lost all knowledge of direction, and wandered aimlessly on. Oppressed by the awful calamity that had befallen them, and with the fate of those who remained behind unknown, they fell a prey to a sort of dumb despair. Lost on the trackless plains, menaced by the prowling wolf and the merciless savage, threatened with death from thirst or starvation, it was no wonder that they lost hope.



They set out in a northerly direction.

It was in such a condition that Paul Sanford found them. Though he had been able to give them food and water, the situation was still a grave one. Paul was not certain that he had not wandered far from the right course. However, he believed that Duck Creek lay some where within a few miles, and if they could only reach it, they would have an abundance of water.

Paul explained his own situation, expressing the belief that with the coming of day, they would be able to find their way to Duck Creek.

"We shall have plenty of water at least, if we can reach the creek," said Paul. "And as for something to eat, there is an abundance of buffaloes and antelopes, and I have a good rifle."

After they had spent an hour in conversation, Paul spread some blankets on the sands and induced the girl and her faithful companion to try to get a little rest while he kept watch.

"But it seems selfish for us to sleep while you remain on guard alone," protested Dora.

"Nonsense," said Paul. "You are worn out from fatigue and want of sleep, while I am not sleepy in the least and am not in need of rest."

"But if you get sleepy and want to rest, if you will call me I will be glad to take your place," said Dora resolutely.

Paul smiled.

"I hardly think I shall find it necessary to call on you," he said, and taking his rifle, he walked to a little knoll where he could command a good view of the surroundings, and took up his silent vigil.

It was a beautiful night—such as could only be found on the Western plains. The sky, the deepest of blue, was studded with blazing stars, while the moon, a great disc of florescent radiance, swung up the heavens. A silence as of death brooded over the scene, broken only at intervals by the low soughing of the summer wind through the sage brush.

Paul walked back and forth across the knoll, pausing now and then to cast searching glances about the moonlit plain. But no sign of life appeared except when a coyote slunk like a shadow along the edge of the ravine.

The night wore slowly away, and as the first beam of the rising sun fell across the level waste Dora Hatfield and her companion awoke, to find Paul standing at the summit of the knoll letting his gaze wander over the wide expanse of plain.

"There is not the least sign of an Indian in sight, Miss Hatfield," he said cheerfully as he came down the slope to greet her. "and there hasn't been anything skulking about here during the night excepting a lean-looking coyote, which was glad enough to keep at a safe distance."

"And you remained at your post all night and never gave me a chance to relieve you," she said, with a reproving shake of the head. "I believe you were afraid to trust me! Were you afraid I would go to sleep?"

"That is just the trouble," laughed Paul. "I was afraid you wouldn't, and I knew you needed rest. You may help me get the grub out of the haversack if you will, and after we have breakfasted, we'll decide on what to do."

There was but a small supply of water left in the canteens, and they were compelled to forego the pleasure of the customary ablutions. But they ate with a keen relish, which is one of the pleasures of life on the plains, and they felt much refreshed.

"And now," said Paul, "the first thing to be done is to get to water. My horse has had none since yesterday in the afternoon, and we have but a small supply in the canteens."

"Shall we try to find our way back to the Arkansas River?" asked Dora.

"I am afraid that it would not be prudent to do so," replied Paul. "It is a long distance, as I reckon it, and we might encounter a band of Indians in that direction. I am of the opinion that we are not far from Duck Creek."

"But I can see no timber," declared Dora, glancing across the plain.

"That is true," responded Paul, "but the streams in this region seem to be destitute of timber in many places. Even the Arkansas River is no exception to the rule, though it is one of the largest rivers in the territory. So there may be but little if any timber on Duck Creek. That leads me to hope that we may be nearer to it than we think."

"Then let us try to find it," suggested Dora.

"I think that would be our best plan," replied Paul.

He brought his horse, saddled and bridled him and said:

"Now, Miss Hatfield, you and Aunt Fanny had better ride or take turns at riding as you see fit. You will find it a great improvement over walking, though you will have to use a man's saddle."

Dora declared that she would take her turn at walking and said she would have favored the plan of riding and hitching, but she did not think it safe to venture so far ahead.

They set out in a northerly direction; and within a half hour came within sight of a little grove of trees.

The sight was hailed with expression of joy.

"I have no doubt that it is Duck Creek," exclaimed Paul, and they pushed eagerly on.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming year many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It only costs you $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

Entertaining a Duke.

Many people are unnecessarily embarrassed while a duke is visiting them. This is a great mistake. Of course a duke is a duke; but, then, there is no reason why he shouldn't be treated with a certain amount of respect.

To do this it is not necessary to respect him too much. Treat him with as much respect as you think he will stand, but do not lavish it upon him.

If he leaves his boots in front of his door at night, do not feel that it is incumbent upon you to get up at 6 o'clock to shine them. Wait until 7, anyway. He will never know the difference.

Let him be alone with your daughter as much as he likes. If he resents this, tell him he can get even later. This might, under some circumstances, seem too candid; but it is better to meet him in a frank and open-hearted manner.

At night, before the duke goes to bed, sneak into his room and turn on all the steam. Being an Englishman, he may not understand this sudden warmth on your part, but you can explain to him the next morning when he fans himself down to the breakfast table, that it's only a foretaste of what he may expect later. Not being able to see the joke, he will probably think that you mean to pay all his expenses to Palm Beach, which will restore him to his good humor.

When you have a duke on hand, do not talk too much about your ancestors, or rub it in about your family. It might make him feel uncomfortable. No duke likes to feel that he is marrying above him.

Naturally you will provide him, while he is with you, with the necessities of life. It is extremely embarrassing when you invite some of your intimate friends in to see your duke to have him sit on the end of your davenport couch with fringe on his trousers and a false bosom to his shirt. Feed him, therefore, on good nourishing food, and make him as respectable as any duke can ever be made.

Came Down a Russian.

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed the pretty girl, all aglow with excitement, "that handsome young man is coming to call on me again."

"You should be careful and find out his station in life," cautioned the prudent mother. "Has he any descent?"

"Oh, yes, mamma—very rapid. He just fell out of an airship."

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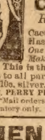

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CHAPTER VII.

CALVIN FINDS MORE TROUBLE.

WHEN Calvin heard the horse stop at the door and Lemuel Steere demanding the whereabouts of Captain Sternberg, he made up his mind that it was time for him to act, and that, too, quickly.

He immediately climbed out of the open window, and keeping in the shadow of the trees until some distance from the house, he started into a run as fast as his legs would carry him. It was some three miles to where the "Black Cat" lay at anchor, and he felt now that his only safety lay in reaching that craft before Lemuel Steere discovered him. He would be missed at once, and a search instituted. Perhaps Lemuel Steere would think he had struck out for Buenos Ayres to find his uncle. If so, he would try to intercept him on the road to that city, and he might reach the schooner in safety.

But what if he should have a search made in both directions, at the same time?

With these thoughts in his mind he kept on, running as he never ran before.

Once he thought he heard the sound of a horse coming toward him, but it proved to be nothing. He hurried on, and finally reached the beach without encountering a soul.

The vessel was anchored in the stream, but how was he to reach her? He could not get aboard without a boat, and there was none to be seen anywhere along the shore. He did not like to make a noise for fear of being heard by his enemy, but there seemed to be no other alternative, so putting his hands to his mouth he called as loud as he could:

"Hallo! Hallo, on board the Black Cat!"

He waited a few moments, and receiving no reply to his hail, repeated it.

This time there was a stir on board, and a voice called out:

"Ahoy, on shore, there! Who are you?"

"Ricardo Carreve," replied Calvin, fortunately retaining presence of mind enough not to mention his own name.

"All right, I'll come for you."

Five minutes later he was shaking hands with the captain of the "Black Cat." Neither spoke a word on the way to the vessel, but after going below, Carreve wanted to know the cause of his sudden appearance.

Calvin told his story, from the time he first went ashore to the sudden appearance of Lemuel Steere, and hour before, concealing nothing but the act of writing to his uncle in Buenos Ayres.

"You're in a nice scrape, my boy," Carreve said, evidently very much disturbed at the news. "Lemuel Steere will not rest a minute until he finds you, and when he does!"

"What then?" asked Calvin, hoping there might be some way to escape trouble.

Carreve shrugged his shoulders in a significant manner.

"He'll do for us both, if he gets a chance. We must get out of here by sunrise. The wind usually comes up with the sun, and with even a light breeze we can soon be out of his reach."

"But won't we have to come back here again, sometime?"

"No. The 'Black Cat' never will see this bay again while Carreve is her captain."

What Carreve's further intentions were Calvin could not ascertain. The captain did not seem inclined to talk, but walked back and forth in a nervous, unsettled way. He was evidently ill at ease.

Finally turning to Calvin, he told him to go to bed and get a few hours' sleep before morning, which advice our hero was not slow in taking, for he was thoroughly tired out after his hard run for the shore.

It was early morning when Calvin awoke. He found the cabin deserted, and hastily donning his apparel, he went on deck. He heard the sound of voices raised in angry dispute. He took a step forward and halted, his heart in his throat; there, standing but a few feet from him, was his enemy, Lemuel Steere.

A look of demoniac hate came into the face of Lemuel Steere as he caught sight of our hero.

"Oh, ho!" he cried. "So you are on board, eh? Well, really, this is an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Calvin Clark."

Calvin stared in terror. Steere had easily penetrated his disguise.

"This is a bit of clever masquerading," continued Steere, pointing to his Spanish clothes. "A gift from your dear uncle, Carreve, I suppose."

He laughed exultantly, and his flaming eyes showed Calvin that he could expect no mercy at his hands.

"Allow me to present this to you, with the compliments of your uncle in Buenos Ayres," said Lemuel Steere, taking a letter from his pocket and handing it to him.

"How did you get this?" demanded Calvin. "Did my uncle see it?"

"Well, I should say not. Fortunately, your uncle trusts me, and I read his letters. Your little trick didn't pan out as you expected."

"I played no trick but what was right. You and your father are a pair of villains."

"Well, maybe, but you keep a civil tongue in your head. You are not dealing with my father now, you are dealing with me. I am too sharp for you, Master Calvin Clark Carreve."

"Oh, you are sharp enough," said Calvin, resolved not to let his enemy see how much he really was afraid of him. "But when the Government gets hold of you and your gang, then we'll see."

"You will never live to see that time," said Steere, growing more and more ugly all the time, and scarcely able to maintain himself. He wished to taunt and torment the young American before he killed him.

The motley crew on the smuggler, seeing that something unusual was happening, left their work and gathered around the two. Calvin stood like a young gladiator, defying the rascal before him.

"You came in my way when you decided to come to Buenos Ayres," said Steere, "and I saw that I must get you out of the way, and had it not been for that fool of a Carreve, you know how well I would have succeeded. Well, Carreve can not help you now. I killed him on the shore yonder, this morning. Oh, it was a nice game. He thought to get you away on the 'Black Cat.' 'His dear nephew,' he said. Ha! ha! You precious imp. You will join him soon enough, I promise you that!"

"What do you mean, you coward?" demanded Calvin. "You will not kill an unarmed man, that is here alone and in your power?"

"Won't I?" chuckled Steere. "That's just what I intend to do, and pretty quick, too. Do you think I am going to let you go free, and get shot myself? Why, the Government soldiers would be down on us in no time. Oh, no! You have played your game and lost. So say your prayers, if you want to. Your time has come."

There was a murmur among the crew. These dark-skinned fellows were not all murderers because they were smugglers. They had liked their captain, and they bore Steere no love for killing him. They liked Calvin because Carreve was his friend, and they were not ready to have him killed before their very eyes.

Calvin heard the murmur, and quickly comprehended that some of the men were friendly to him, and opposed to Lemuel Steere. He instantly turned and addressed them:

"Men, I have sailed with you," he said. "Carreve was your friend and mine. Will you let this man kill me, as he did your captain?"

There was no answer from the crew, but they looked at each other with dark, questioning glances.

"Will they let me?" yelled Steere, now fairly beside himself with rage. "They can't help themselves. I'll show you and them what I care for the whole beastly crowd!"

He drew a revolver from his belt. As he raised it to aim at Calvin, the boy felt himself suddenly pushed one side and a powerful fellow took his place before Steere.

"You no shoot!" said the dusky giant.

Steere, who had now lost all control of himself, turned white at this unexpected interruption.

"Get out of the way!" he cried. "Do you know that boy is a traitor?"

"You no shoot!" said the man, calmly.

"He shall die!" said Steere. "He is placing us all in danger of our lives. He knows all of our secrets. If he lives and gets away from this schooner he will have us all shot. I tell you he must die!"

"No shoot!" was the same impassive answer.

"No kill," now came from several voices in the crowd.

"He berry good boy, he captain's friend. What for must he die?" asked one, who had heard every word of Steere's explanation.

"Because I say so," said Steere. Then, with an angry glance around, he added: "And I am going to shoot him, and every one of you that interferes, as well!"

A low muttering from the assembled crew greeted this speech. Steere was not aiding his cause by rousing the anger of such men as these.

Calvin was quick to see the feeling that Steere had created against himself, and was determined to take advantage of it.

"Every man who sticks to me will be rewarded by my uncle," he called out. "What if he does kill me? Does he think I was fool enough to write but one letter? Before the week has passed his gang of rascals will be in prison. Where will you be if you follow him? Stick by me, and every one of you will go free. I promise that!"

There was a rising sound of approval from the crowd.

"Those that are with me to the end, come behind me," said Steere. Less than half the crew obeyed. There was a cry from those who remained.

"No kill the boy, we go then," said one.

"The cub must die. Stand aside!"

The revolver was raised again, and at the same moment a dozen other revolvers came into view. Steere's men had some, and Calvin's men the rest.

"This is mutiny!" yelled Steere. "I will have you all in prison."

Back in the crowd stood a short, thin man, of lighter complexion than the rest. He had an intelligent face. He had as yet said nothing. He now stepped forward.

"You lie," he said. "This is no mutiny. A crew can mutiny only against its officers. You have no business on this vessel. You have killed our captain. We will not stand by you."

"Then take this!" said Steere, firing his revolver at the man.

The ball took effect in his arm, and he uttered a cry of rage. In an instant half a dozen shots had been fired. Several of the crew were wounded, and Lemuel Steere lay writhing on the deck.

It was all over in an instant. The crew as if suddenly thinking of the rashness of their act, stopped and looked at Calvin.

"Men," he said, "this could not be avoided. This man is a scoundrel of the worst kind. He killed Carreve, and would have killed me. I never did anything to him. He wanted to kill me to get my uncle's wealth. He would betray you all, if it were for his interest to do so. If you keep in with Captain Sternberg you will probably all be shot. Now, if you will stand by me, and sail this schooner to Buenos Ayres, I promise you not only safety and freedom from arrest, but money besides. My uncle is rich. What I tell him the Government must know also. You will come in for a reward. The fact of your being smugglers counts for nothing. You are going to save the Government. You will be rewarded for that, and everything else will be overlooked. What do you say?"

Some of the crew understood all that he said, and others nothing at all, but they talked rapidly among themselves, and those that had stood by Calvin had the best of the argument. Lemuel Steere lay upon the deck dying. He could be of no further use to them. They all finally gave in, and Calvin had won the day.

"We go with you," said the light complexioned fellow. "We go with you. Carreve dead, you our young captain. You tell your uncle we not bad men. No one get in prison."

"Not one of you," said Calvin. "Now see to those men who are wounded. Then let's get to Buenos Ayres."

In a short time the Black Cat was gotten under way, and went speeding up the river on the rising breeze. Calvin could not, of course, navigate the vessel, but he felt sure that the crew could be trusted. He had frightened them when he spoke of the letter to his uncle, giving the plot away to the Government.

The Black Cat sailed into the harbor of Buenos Ayres, and an inspector of customs came on board.

"Well!" he said, addressing himself to Calvin, who met him at the gangway, "it is a long time since the Black Cat sailed into this harbor. What's her cargo?"

"None," said Calvin. "I am here on service for the Government. I must get at once to Mr. David Clark. Do you know him?"

"Clark, the millionaire? I should say I did. What do you want with him?"

"I will tell him that," said Calvin. "There is nothing to go ashore but me. If you think it necessary you can go with me."

The inspector was evidently impressed, and his curiosity aroused.

"Come along," he said.

They were soon ashore, and Calvin was amazed at the fine streets and buildings he saw. They got on an electric car, and after a short ride got off before a splendid resi dence of brick and stone.

"Clark lives in here," said the inspector.

Mr. Clark was with his wife and daughter eating supper, when a servant announced that two persons wanted to see him on important business. He went into the wide hall, where the two sat waiting, and looked at Calvin curiously.

"What can I do for you?" asked Mr. Clark, kindly.

"Uncle! Uncle David! Don't you know me?" burst out Calvin. "I am Calvin Clark!"

His uncle turned pale, and stepped back.

"You thought I was drowned, but I was not," said Calvin. "Lemuel Steere threw me overboard from the Royal Mail, but I was picked up."

A great sob of joy welled up from Mr. Clark's bosom. The next instant he clasped Calvin to him, the tears rolling down his cheeks. He was so glad to see him that he could not find words for utterance, and entirely overlooked his statement about Leumel Steere.

"I have important news for you," said Calvin, "I want to see Aunt Emma and Cousin Julia, then I want to tell you something."

His uncle led the way to the dining room, and the inspector realizing that there was nothing for him to do, took his departure.

Calvin was greeted with overwhelming caresses by his aunt and cousin. They had expected, before they had heard that he was drowned, to see a childish boy, but here was a manly young fellow who, after many strange adventures, had come to save them and the Government.

Calvin soon told his story, and he hurried off with his uncle to see the President.

Calvin related his experience, and was listened to with great interest.

Some officials in uniform were called in, and he repeated his story to them.

Calvin then went home with his uncle, and they sat up late that night listening to his recital over and over again of his adventures with Lemuel Steere, Captain Sternberg, and on board the Black Cat.

What pained them most was to learn that Lemuel Steere, the man whom they had all trusted, was such a villain.

Calvin told his uncle of the promise he had made the men of the Black Cat, and he assured him that the President would see that his promise was fulfilled.

Mr. Clark had taken all of Calvin's things from the Royal Mail, when he was reported lost, and he was soon clad in a trim New York outfit. As he was changing his clothes he found in the pocket of those he was wearing, the list of names he had copied for Captain Sternberg. These were used at the trial of the conspirators.

All of the conspirators were brought to justice, and the contraband stores were seized by the Government. Captain Sternberg was imprisoned, and Lemuel Steere died of his wounds.

Calvin was received with enthusiasm by the people of Buenos Ayres, and the President gave him a medal, on which was the date and story of his valuable service to the Government.

Mr. Clark is delighted with Calvin's quickness in grasping the details of his large business, and there is no reason, if he lives, why he will not only be a good and true man, but a rich one as well.

The end.

◆

A bank employe says a $10 bill lasts ten or twelve years. He must be living with his wife's folks.

IN RELATION TO COLUMBUS.

"I see," said the professor, cocking up his es upon the stove in the grocery-store, see that they talk of putting up a monu-nt to Christopher Columbus in Phila-phia. It's too bad the way people've n fooled about him. He never discov-ed America, and I've made up my mind bust that old fraud and shake him out nd let the people see what kind of a rotten old swindle he is."

"You say that Columbus didn't discover America?" asked Mr. Partridge.

"Certainly he didn't. He was a mean, lubberly, chuckle-headed, one-horse sneak, who went paddling around in a scow, letting on he was doing big things, when he hadn't pluck enough to get out of sight of land."

"Who did discover it, then?"

"Well, I'll tell you fellows in advance of publication, but mind you lay low about it. It was Potiphar!"

"What was his first name?"

"First name? Thunder! Why, he hadn't any. It was only Potiphar—old Pharaoh's Potiphar, you know."

"How d'you find out about it?"

"Why, you know old Gridley, up in the city? Well, last year he was in Egypt, and he brought home a mummy, all wrapped up in bedclothes and soldered around with sealing-wax. Gridley asked me to come over and help to undress him, and we tackled that mummy, and after rolling off a couple of hundred yards of calico we reached him. Looked exactly like dried beef. Black as your hat and just about tender enough to chip down for tea.

"Gridley said he'd like to know who the old rooster was, and I looked him over to find out. You know how they put up a mummy, don't you? Take out all his machinery inside, and fill him up with nutmegs and cinnamon. Then they set a brass door-plate in his stomach and make some little memoranda," with obituary poetry, and all that kind of thing. Anyhow, after polishing him up with a flesh-brush for a minute or two, I found the door-plate, and with some care I managed to read the inscription on it. It was this: 'I am Potiphar, servant of Pharaoh. I was buried three thousand years before the Christian era, I discovered America. C. Columbus was an impostor.' That's what the inscription said, and in my opinion that settles it.

"Now, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I've had a cast made of that drief beef, and I intend to have it swelled all out and made into a statue, and I'm going to set it up at my own expense alongside the statue of Columbus, and have a sign put on it to the effect that Columbus is a ragged old fraud. Then I intend to get up a memorial to Congress asking it to change tne name of the country to Potipharia, and to make Potiphar's sacred animal, the tom-cat, the emblematical bird of the nation, instead of the eagle. Be a big thing, won't it, to compel everybody to sing 'Hail, Potipharia, happy land!' and 'Potipharia the Gem of the Ocean?' "

"You say you read the inscription on the plate," said Partridge. "I didn't know you understood the language."

"Can read it as easy as a, b, c."

" 'Buried three thousand years before the Christian era,' I think you said it read. How did old Pot know anything about the Christian era if he died that long before?"

"Blamed if I know. Cast his prophetic eye over the future, I s'pose."

"Well, how in thunder could he tell that Columbus was going to discover America?"

"That's so. I dunno. Is kind of queer."

"Do you know what I think of you?" asked Partridge. "I think you'd lie the hair off of an old-fashioned trunk, and that if I was asked to nominate the champion American fraud to go on a pedestal at some national exhibition, I'd send in your name."

"Would you, though, really?"

"I would."

"Well, send an order over to Jones' for drinks all round. It's surprising how well you know me."

The Potiphar memorial has not yet been sent to Congress.

The Missing End.

An Irishman on board a man-of-war was ordered to haul in a tow-line. After pulling in forty or fifty fathoms, he muttered to himself:

"Surely it's as long as today and tomorrow. It's a good week's work for any five in the ship. Bad luck to the leg or the arm it'll leave at last. What, more of it yet? Och, murder! The say's mighty deep, to be sure!"

After continuing in a similar strain, he suddenly stopped short, and, addressing the officer, exclaimed, "Bad manners to me, sir, if I don't think somebody's cut off the other end of it! It's missing."

A Statesman.

Shortly after Mr. Gladstone's death a local politician delivered an address upon the life of the statesman before a school.

When he had finished, he said, "Now, can any of you tell me what a statesman is?" A little hand went up, and a little girl replied, "A statesman is a man who makes speeches." "Hardly that," answered the politician, who loved to tell this story. "For instance, I sometimes make speeches, and yet I am not a statesman."

The little hand again went up. "I know," and the answer came triumphantly, "a statesman is a man who makes good speeches!"

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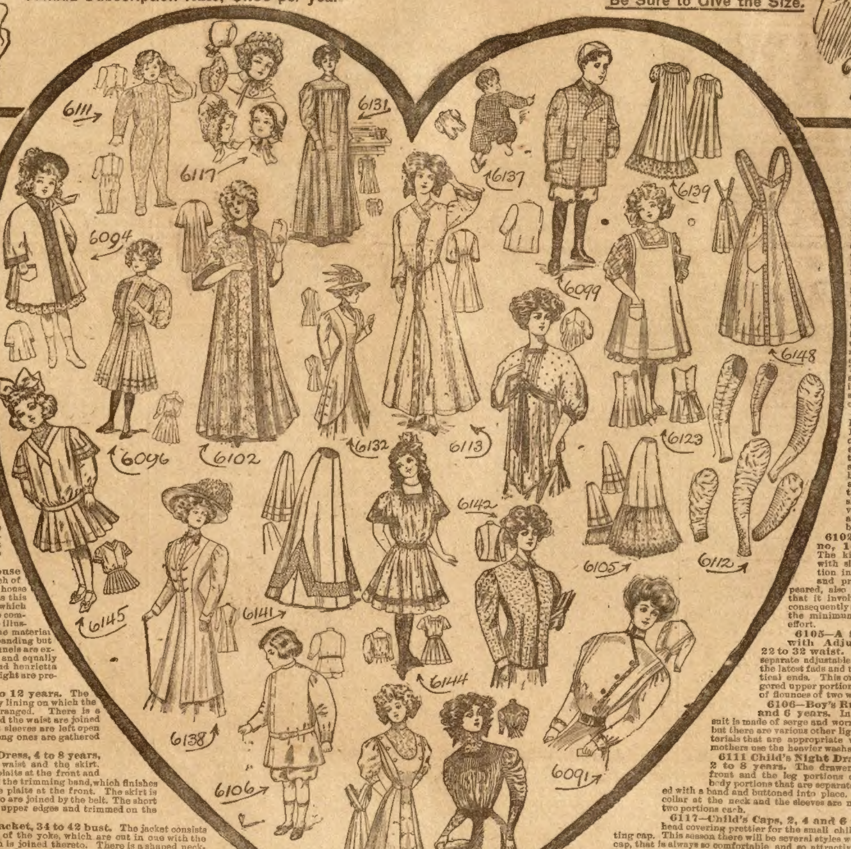

6139—Infant's Dress with Round Yoke, onesize. The yoke is made in one piece and the dress itself in two portions, which are gathered and joined to the lower edge of the yoke. When the frill is used the skirt is cut off at hem width and the frill is joined to the lower edge. The sleeves are simple full ones that are gathered into bands and the closing is made at the back.

6140—Misses' Tucked Blouse, 14 and 16 years. The waist is made with a fitted lining and itself consists of the front and the backs. It is laid in fine tucks and when the chemisette is used it is cut out on indicated lines. The sleeves are in one piece each, but arranged over fitted linings, made with upper and under portions, and these linings are faced to form deep cuffs.

6141—Six Gored Skirt, 22 to 30 waist. The skirt is cut in six gores and there consequently is a seam at the center front as well as at center back. When the habit back is desired the fulness is cut off on indicated lines. The band which forms the trimming is arranged over the skirt and is mitered to conform to the indicated shaping.

6142—Loose Fitting House Coat, 34 to 44 bust. Much of the popularity extended to house coats made on such a plan as this one is due to the ease with which they can be made and to the comfort that they provide. In the illustration eiderdown flannel is the material and the trimming is ribbon banding but the various lighter weight flannels are exceedingly beautiful this year and equally appropriate while cashmere and henrietta cloth and fabrics of similar weight are preferred by many women.

6144—Girl's Dress, 6 to 12 years. The dress is made with a fitted body lining on which the portions of the waist are arranged. There is a straight skirt and the skirt and the waist are joined by means of a belt. The short sleeves are left open at their lower edges but the long ones are gathered into bands.

6145—Child's French Dress, 4 to 8 years, The dress is made with the waist and the skirt. The waist is laid in inverted plaits at the front and in tucks over the shoulders and the trimming band, which finishes the neck, terminates under the plaits at the front. The skirt is straight and plaited and the two are joined by the belt. The short sleeves are gathered at their upper edges and trimmed on the indicated lines.

6146—Empire House Jacket, 34 to 42 bust. The jacket consists of the front and back portions of the yoke, which are cut in one with the sleeves and the full skirt, which is joined thereto. There is a shaped neckband which finishes the neck edge and straight bands are joined to the lower edges of the sleeves.

6148—Princess Apron, Small 32 or 34, Medium 36 or 38, Large 40 or 42 bust. The apron is made with the full skirt and the panel, which is cut in one with the shoulder straps. The skirt portion is gathered and joined to the belt and the ends of the shoulder straps are attached to position while sash ends are joined to the belt by means of which the closing is made.

6113—Misses' Bath Robe, 12, 14 and 16 years. The robe is made with the backs and fronts and is rendered shapely by means of center back and under-arm seams. The sleeves are in one piece each and the cord is held in place by means of straps at the under arm seams.

6112—Tucked or Gathered Sleeves, Small 32 or 34, Medium 36 or 38, Large 40 or 42 bust. Fancy sleeves that fit the arm somewhat closely are among the latest decrees of fashion and here are two models that are charmingly attractive and which are suited to a variety of materials. They can be utilized both for the new gowns and for those that are to be remodeled and and they are exceedingly desirable.

6136—Misses' Semi-Princess Dress, 14 and 16 years. The latest variation of the ever popular guimpe dress for young girls takes the semi-princess form and is graceful and attractive, yet simple withal. This one includes a full length panel, which is cut in one with the shoulder straps, giving a distinctly novel effect, and will be found appropriate for all seasonable materials.

6091—Blouse or Shirt Waist, 32 to 42 bust. The waist is made with fronts and backs and is laid in tucks over the shoulders which give tapering lines at the back and provide becoming fullness at the front. There are shirt waist sleeves that are gathered into straight cuffs and when the rolled-over cuffs are used they are seamed to their lower edges.

6094—A Child's Kimono Coat, 4 to 8 years. Loose coats that can be slipped on and off without difficulty are the ones that little girls are sure to like and which cannot fail to appeal to wise mothers. This one, in kimono style, is graceful and attractive yet so simple that there is scarcely appreciable labor involved in the making.

6096 — A Girl's Semi - Princess Dress, 6 to 12 yrs. The semi-princess is as great a favorite for the school girls as it is for their elders and very charming are many of the new models that have appeared. The one illustrated is among the latest and is adapted both to present needs and to the coming winter.

6099 — A Boy's Reefer Coat, 4 to 12 years. There is no overcoat better adapted to the small boy than the one in reefer style. This model can be made of any seasonable material, but in the illustration it is shown made from cheviot in shades of brown and tan, with collar of brown velvet.

6102—Misses' Kimono, 14 and 16 years. The kimono that is made with sleeves and body portion in one is of the newest and prettiest that has appeared, also is so simple to make that it involves almost no labor, consequently allows of variety with the minimum of cost as well as effort.

6105—A Sheath Petticoat with Adjustable Flounce, 22 to 32 waist. Petticoats made with separate adjustable flounces are among the latest fads and they serve many practical ends. This one is made with a five gored upper portion and allows a choice of flounces of two widths.

6106—Boy's Russian Suit, 2, 4 and 6 years. In the illustration the suit is made of serge and worn with a leather belt, but there are various other light weight wool materials that are appropriate while a great many mothers use the heavier washable fabrics.

6111 Child's Night Drawers with Feet, 2 to 8 years. The drawers are made with the front and the leg portions cut in one, and back body portions that are separate. The fall is finished with a band and buttoned into place. There is a standing collar at the neck and the sleeves are made in coat style, in two portions each.

6117—Child's Caps, 2, 4 and 6 years. There is no head covering prettier for the small child than the close fitting cap. This season there will be several styles worn, the little Dutch cap, that is always so comfortable and so attractive, and also the more fancy Normandy caps and those with full crowns and fancy rolled back revers. All three styles are shown in the illustration.

6137—Child's Overall or Creeping Apron. One size. Every mother of a creeping child will appreciate this useful, protective little garment. It can be drawn on over the frock or it can be worn without one, it allows the child perfect freedom and activity while it can be made from any desirable material.

6138—Coat with Vest, 34 to 42 bust. The coat that is made with vest portions is always a favorite and satisfactory one. This model includes the long lines that give a slender effect and the new plain coat sleeves of moderate size. It can be made of one material throughout or with the vest portions of something in contrast as liked and it is adapted to all seasonable materials.

6132—Four Button Coat, 34 to 42 bust. Perforated for cutaway effect and to be made with or without openings at the under-arm seams. The coat that is closed with four buttons is a favorite one and is to be noted in a number of variations. Here is a model that can be made in cutaway effect or with straight fronts as liked and with or without the points at the lower edge, so it really includes several in the one.

6131—Work Apron, 32 to 42 bust. The work apron that is really protective and practical is the one that wise women demand. This one is just as well adapted to the artist and the studio as it is to the housewife and will keep the gown of either fresh and free from soil, no matter what the occupation of the moment.

6123—Girl's Apron, 6 to 12 years. Attractive aprons always are in demand and this pretty one can be made either with or without a sash. Plain and cross-barred lawns, linens and all materials of the sort are used for the white ones, and, if something very sturdy is wanted, chambray or checked ginghams will be found satisfactory while for the neck and the armholes frills of the same or of embroidery or simply the stitched bands can be utilized. The pockets are sure to be welcomed and the apron is so pretty that it is to be commended.

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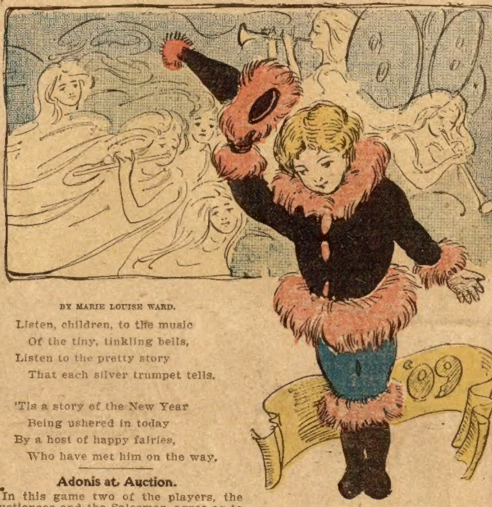
FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

CREED FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY GRACE G. BOSTWICK.

To do my work as best I may,
Rising to meet each dawning day
With honest faith in human love
And sincere trust in One above.
To face what comes of woe or grief
With courage won of my belief
That what is sent is for my good,
If borne with patient hardihood.
To gentle be and tender, too,
With human frailty, and to do
Whate'er I can, though small it be,
To help my brother man to free
His nobler self unto the right,
And thus to clear his blinded sight.
Never to fail in charity
Nor kindly given sympathy.
Never to question how or why,
But simply live—and simply die.

COMING OF LITTLE NEW YEAR.



BY MARIE LOUISE WARD.

Listen, children, to the music
Of the tiny, tinkling bells,
Listen to the pretty story
That each silver trumpet tells.

'Tis a story of the New Year
Being ushered in today
By a host of happy fairies,
Who have met him on the way.

Adonis at Auction.

In this game two of the players, the Auctioneer and the Salesman, agree as to the thing to be taken in exchange for Adonis, but this they keep secret between themselves.

As many slips of paper are cut as there are players. On one the name Adonis is written. They are folded and put in a hat and the players each draw one, and he or she who draws "Adonis" is seated on a chair in the middle of the circle (the Auctioneer beside him), and is put up for sale at auction.

The Auctioneer says: "Here is Adonis, remarkable for his great beauty and love of hunting. What will you bid for him?" Each player bids in rotation, but must not bid money. One may bid a bunch of roses, and the Auctioneer cries: "A bunch of roses! Who bids for Adonis? Going, going, for a bunch of roses," etc. Another bids a lump of sugar, an old gray goose, a postage stamp or anything thought of, until some one may chance to bid the thing agreed upon between the Auctioneer and the seller, upon which Adonis is knocked down to that bidder and is bound to do whatever his purchaser commands; such as sing a song, tell a story, hop 'round the room, etc. Should the right price not be given by the time the bidding has gone round five times the Auctioneer tells what it is, saying: "I have bought Adonis in with a ring," or bell, whatever has been fixed as the price. Then all who have failed must pay forfeit to Adonis and the game may begin again.

A Sea With a Salt Roof.

There is in Siberia one of the strangest freaks of nature yet discovered. Near a place called Obdorsk is a salt lake nine miles wide and seventeen miles long, almost a little sea. And yet, except in a few scattered places, this great body of water is covered with a roof of salt, which is about three feet above the surface. The traveler that found it says it was in summer time that he visited it and when approached it looks like a vast plain of snow surrounded by fields of ripening grain. This contrast makes the sight all the more interesting. An old man, who remembers when the first salt crystals formed on the surface of the water, acted as a guide to the traveler. Every year the evaporation of the water left more crystals, and after a while they became a sort of crust covering nearly the whole surface. Several years ago the water found an outlet into the River Obi and that lowered the lake's surface about three feet, leaving that space between the water and the salt roof. The guide took the traveler down through a hole in the roof into a low flat boat that was resting in the water underneath. They both lay down on their backs in the boat and moved it here and there on the water, using the irregularities of the roof as a means of pushing the boat along. The effect, as the sun shone down through the crystals, was magically beautiful, its rays being refracted into all the hues of the rainbow.

The Sparrow's Protege.

A lady had a canary, a wonderful singer, but with such a loud note that she was frequently obliged to put him outside the window on a branch of a tree. One morning, while the cage was thus placed, a sparrow was observed to fly round it, and stand on the top and twitter to the canary, as if desirous of forming a friendship.

Presently he flew away, but returned in a short time, bearing a worm in his bill, which he dropped into the cage.

Day after day this sparrow continued his friendly acts, and at length the two birds grew so intimate that the canary received the food thus brought into his own bill from that of the sparrow.

Some of the neighbors, desirous to see how far the sparrow's generosity would go, hung out their canaries, also, when he also brought them worms, but his first and longest visit was always paid to his earliest acquaintance.

The Ocean's Volume.

If we desired to measure the water in the Pacific Ocean, the figures that we should have to use are almost unreadable —200,000,000,000,000 gallons. It has been said that with the Falls of Niagara running at their present stupendous volume, it would take the water of the Pacific more than a million years to pass over them. If it were possible to put the water of the Pacific into a hollow sphere, it would be necessary to provide one with a diameter of 726 miles. The Atlantic Ocean is much smaller than the Pacific, having about 73,000,000,000,000 gallons; so that the Atlantic might be contained in the Pacific three times. If it were put into a sphere, the diameter of the sphere would have to be about 533 miles. But you may get a better conception of the immensity of the Atlantic —to say nothing of the Pacific—by supposing that its waters are to be put into a pipe reaching to the sun, say 93,000,000 miles away. That pipe would have to be a little more than a mile in diameter.

A Little Girl's Feat.

Little Miss Evelyn Albee, of Alma Center, may deservedly be called a heroine. A few days ago, while playing near an open well, she accidentally stepped in, says the Kennebec Journal. The well was eighteen feet deep, with six feet of water. Her playmate heard the splash, but was too frightened to call for assistance. Evelyn, who is not six years old yet, was equal to the occasion and clambered to the top, unaided and unharmed. "How did she do it?" is the general question asked, but no one but the lady herself knows, and she wishes to forget it. That she wasn't hurt in some way was truly remarkable.

AN ALPHABET OF SPORTS

A is for archery, sport with the bow,
B is for balls of rubber and snow;
C is for cat's-cradle, coasting and chess,
D is for dominoes, played with success.
E is for euchre, an old German game.
F is for fishing, a sport of great fame.
G is for golf, a popular play,
With men and with women, merry and gay.
H is for hare and hounds—see the hounds run!
I is for Indian, boys think it fun.
J is for jackstraws and jackstones, too,
K is for kites, far up in the blue.
L is for leap-frog—jump over his back.
M is for marbles, blue, yellow and black.
N is for ninepins—roll the ball straight,
Down go the ninepins, five, seven, eight!
O is for "Observation," so keen,
Try to remember the things you have seen.
P is for polo, played in the park.
Q is for quoits, pitched at a mark.
R is for rowing, by river and sea.
S is for skating, for you and for me.
T is for tennis, a game to allure
The hand and the eye that are skillful and sure.
U is for umpire—quarrels he'll quell.
V is for vaulting, jump high and jump well.
W is for wheeling, for man and for maid.
X is for Xystus, where Greek games were played.
Y is for yachting from port to port.
Z is for zigzag, the very last sport.

Needed Help.

Little Dorothy, at the age of 6, was very thoughtless regarding the care of her clothes, and the many admonitions she had received about neatly arranging her clothes on a chair each night before retiring, were daily forgotten.

One night, just as she was ready for bed, her mother came in, and, finding the little garments in a heap on the floor as usual, said: "Dorothy, you may say your prayers, and then mother will have to punish you for not minding her about your clothes." Having said this, she stepped into the adjoining room and partially closed the door.

In a few moments she heard Dorothy, who was a firm believer in the power of prayer, repeat, "Now I lay me," and after the "Amen" she heard this appeal: "And, dear Lord, if ever you wanted to help a little kid, now's your chance."

THE ECHO.

I've found the jolliest playmate
In the woods where I go each day;
She always answers my laughter
And repeats each word I say!

I'm told that her name is "Echo"
And I must be careful to say
Only such words that are pleasant
Whenever I pass that way.

For it's fun to hear gay Echo
Repeat every laughing word,
But s'pose I should say some cross ones
And they should be overheard!

OPEN THE DOOR.

Who comes dancing over the snow,
His soft little feet all bare and rosy?
Open the door, though the wild winds blow,
Take the child in and make him cozy,
Take him and hold him dear,
He is the wonderful New Year.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

"Where do the New Years come from?"
Says grandpa, looking away
Through the frosty rime on the window,
To the distant hills, so gray.
"They come from the country of youth, I know,
And they pass to the land of long ago."

A NEW YEAR'S PIE.

Don't you think you'd like to try
Stirring up a New Year's pie
Big enough to last a year—
Wouldn't that be very queer?

Grandma did, she told me so,
Many, many years ago.

This is how they made the pie—
We can do it, you and I.

First they put in noble deeds,
Sprinkled well with willing seeds,
Then politeness, love and cheer,
Made a pie to last a year!